KAMIGAMI NO ITADAKI

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1

Summary :

Chapter 01 :	The undefeated summit	03
Chapter 02 :	The town of all the dreams	35
Chapter 03 :	The starving wolf	103
Chapter 04 :	Oni-sura	167
Chapter 05 :	First ascension	189
Chapter 06 :	A wild independent guy	211
Chapter 07 :	The wind of the summits	255
Chapter 08 :	Solitary ascension	277

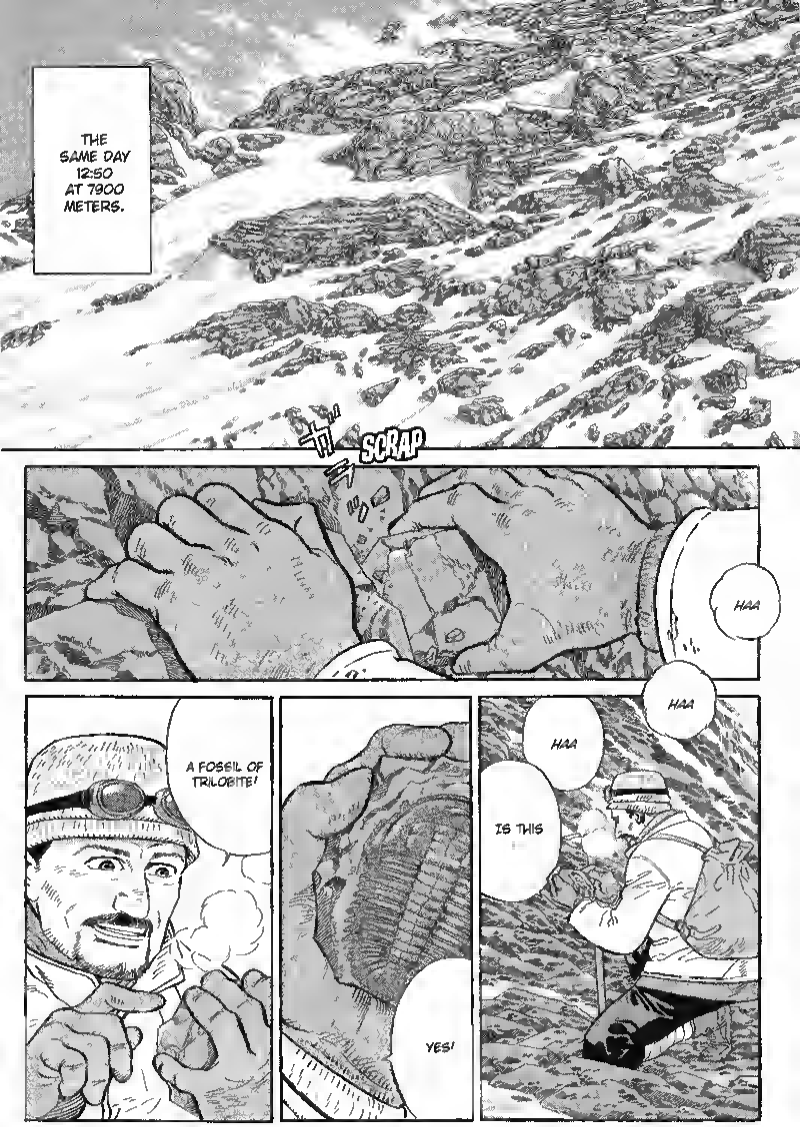
Chapter 01 :
The undefeated summit

KAMIGAMI NO ITADAKI

VOLUME 01

PWSSHH
PWSSHH
STAK

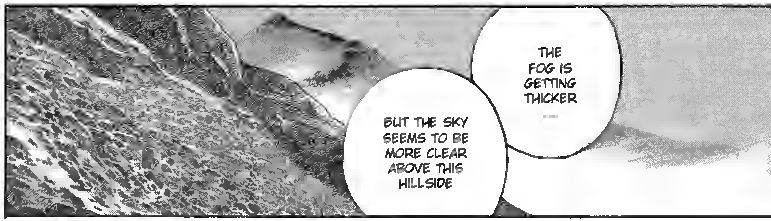
WUSH
FWUSH
FWUSH
8 JUNE 1924
12:30
,T 8260
METERS.
Fwuuuuhh


THE SAME DAY 12:50 AT 7900 METERS.
SCRAP
HAA
HAA
HAA
IS THIS
YES!
A FOSEIL OF TRILOBITE!

IT'S AMAZING !
IT'S THE FIRST FOSSIL EVER FOUND SO HIGH!
WHAT A DISCOVERY
IT'S BEAUTIFUL
Fwaaaash
IT SEEMS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE
BUT THIS PLACE WAS COVERED BY THE SEA MANY YEARS AGO
WHAT STRENGTH, WHAT PHENOMENAL POWER COULD HAVE BROUGHT THE SEA AT THIS ALTITUDE ?
WHO CAN REASONABLY IMAGINE HOW MANY YEARS IT TOOK ?

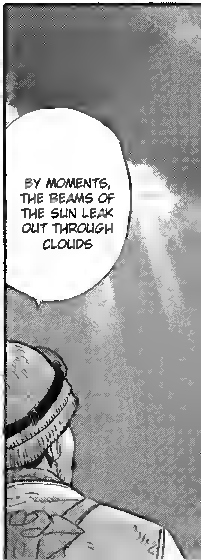
PFYUH

THREE MONTHS HAVE PASSED SINCE THEY LEFT LIVERPOOL, ON FEBRUARY 29TH


THE FOG IS GETTING THICKER
BUT THE SKY SEEMS TO BE MORE CLEAR ABOVE THIS HILLSIDE

THEY SHOULD NOT BE FAR FROM THE TOP

Fwoooshh
IF THE WIND REMAINS AND THE SKY REMAINS CLEAR OVER THE LINE OF CREST, THE CONDITIONS ARE NOT BAD
IF, AS EXPECTED, MALLORY AND IRVINE LEFT THE CAMP NUMBER 6 EARLY THIS MORNING


BY MOMENTS, THE BEAMS OF THE SUN LEAK OUT THROUGH CLOUDS

HE DIDN'T HAVE THE LUCK TO SET OUT TO CONQUER THE HIGHEST SUMMIT OF THE WORLD BUT, AS CONSOLATION, HE WAS THE FIRST ONE TO BE ABLE TO STUDY THIS STILL UNEXPLORED ZONE
NOEL ODELL HAD TAKEN PART IN THIS EXPEDITION AS A GEOLOGIST
TAC
TAC
ODELL PURSUED HIS RESEARCH ENTHUSIASTICALLY
OH!
AMAZING
WHAT A SPLENDID AMMONITE!
HAA
HAA
FINALLY
I'M ACCLIMATISED TO THE HEIGHT EVEN BETTER THAN I THOUGHT
DAMN!
I'M OUT OF BREATH BUT I FEEL THAT I STILL HAVE ALL MY STRENGTH
HAA
HAA

SUDDENLY, ODELL FELT AN ARDENT SENSATION
OVERWHELMING
OPPRESSIVE
HAA
HAA
AN INDEFINABLE EMOTION
HAA
HAA
IF ONLY MALLORY HAD CHOSEN ME AS COMPANION INSTEAD OF IRVINE
I, TOO, WOULD HAVE LIKED WALKING ON THE SUMMIT OF EVEREST THE ROOF OF THE WORLD
DAMN IT
HAA
HAA

NEVERTHELESS, IT'S NOT ME WHO WAS CHOSEN
HE PREFERRED TO LEAVE WITH IRVINE BECAUSE OF HIS SKILLS FOR THE MECHANICS WHICH ALLOW HIM TO REPAIR OXYGEN DEVICES
HAA
HAA
HAA
HAA
MY PHYSICAL CONDITION IS EXCELLENT AND I'M ACCLIMATISED TO THE HEIGHT MUCH BETTER THAN IRVINE.
MALLORY KNOWS THAT.
FWOOOSHH
AT THIS MOMENT
CLOUDS TORE SUDDENLY TO LET PLACE AT A BLUE AND CLEAR SKY
HA!

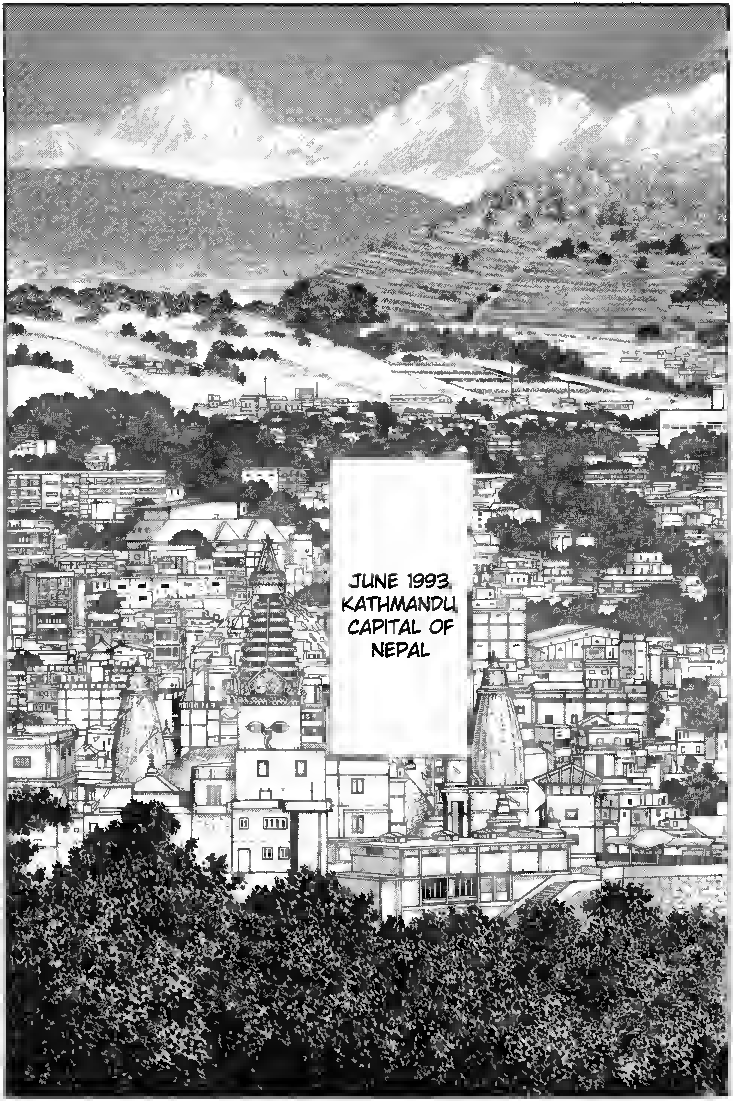
THIS SUDDEN BRIGHT PERIOD WAS LIKE A MIRACLE
THE TOP OF THE EVEREST HAD JUST COME TO LIGHT IN ALL ITS MAGNIFICENCE
WHAT A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT!
IT'S WONDERFUL!
AH...
THE VIEW WHICH ODELL HAD THEN, HAD TO HAUNT HIM FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE

YES
IT'S REALLY MALLORY
AND BEHIND
WOULD THEIR PROGESSION NOT HAVE TAKEN SOME DELAY ?
IT HAS TO BE IRVINE

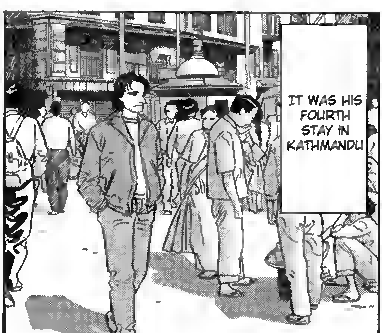
AT THIS TIME ...
THEY SHOULD ALREADY BE ENGAGED ON THE SUMMIT'S EDGE
IT'S STRANGE ...
THEY SHOULD BE FURTHER
WHAT HAPPENED ?
COULD THEY HAVE MET A PROBLEM WHICH WOULD HAVE DELAYED THEIR DEPARTURE ?
MAYBE THEY HAVE PROBLEMS WITH THE OXYGEN DEVICES ...
WHICH DIDN'T WORK CORRECTLY ?
WHAT-EVER ...
THEY'RE REALLY LATE.
UNLESS THEY ...
MET A DIFFICULT PASSAGE ON THE ROAD WHICH WOULD HAVE MADE THEM TO WASTE TIME ?

THEY STILL HAVE SOME TIME LEFT, BUT...
JUST ENOUGH TO REACH THE SUMMIT
AND TO COME BACK TO CAMP NUMBER 6 BEFORE THE NIGHT.
Fwaaash
AH...
AH...

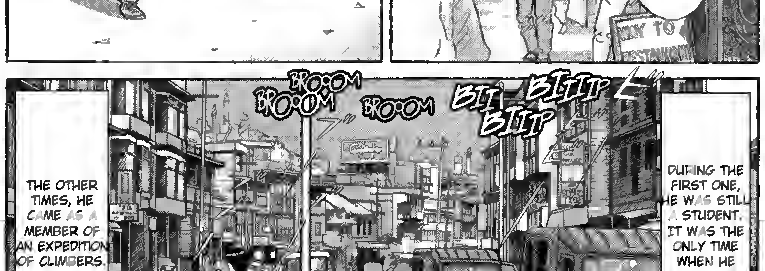
CLOUDS CLOSED THE SCENE AND IT WAS THE LAST TIME WHEN NOEL SAW BOTH SILHOUETTES
JUNE 8TH 1924, MALLORY AND IRVINE DISAPPEARED AND LEFT BEHIND THEM THE MYSTERY OF THE FIRST ASCENT OF EVEREST.


JUNE 1993,
KATHMANDU,
CAPITAL OF
NEPAL

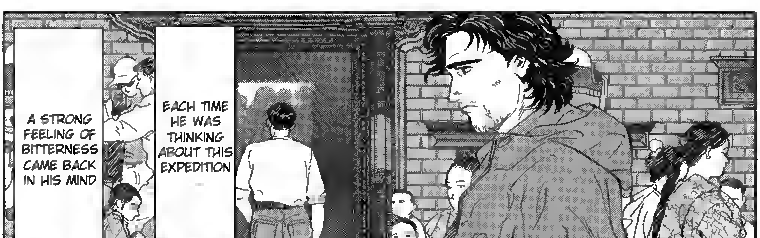
IT'S CHEAP !
JUST LOOK !
A MYSTERIOUS AND LABYRINTH LIKE CITY
FRIEND!
CHEAP CARPETS! CHEAP!


IT WAS HIS FOURTH STAY IN KATHMANDU

CHEAP!
YOU NOT BUY?


BROOM
BROOM
BROOM
BI BIIP
BIIP
THE OTHER TIMES, HE CAME AS A MEMBER OF AN EXPEDITION OF CLIMBERS.
DURING THE FIRST ONE, HE WAS STILL A STUDENT. IT WAS THE ONLY TIME WHEN HE WAS ALONE.

THIS TIME AGAIN, FUKAMACHI HAD MADE THIS TRIP AS PHOTOGRAPHER IN A JAPANESE TEAM COME TO OVERCOME EVEREST.
FUKAMACHI MAKOTO 40 YEARS OLD


A STRONG FEELING OF BITTERNESS CAME BACK IN HIS MIND
EACH TIME HE WAS THINKING ABOUT THIS EXPEDITION

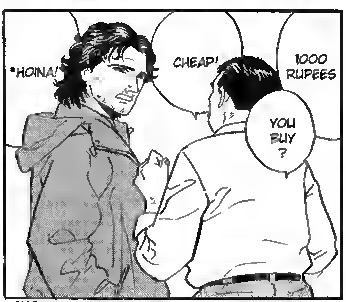
Fwaaaahh

I THINK IT'S BETTER TO GIVE UP ON THIS FIRST ASSAULT
IT'S TOO DANGEROUS TO CONTINUE
IT'S FUNAJIMA
FSHUUF
FSHUUF
IS IT OK FOR EVERYBODY ?

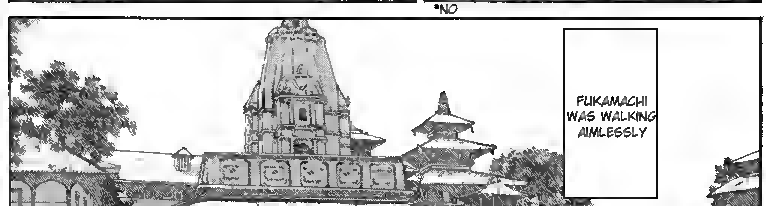
Fwish
FLAP
FLAP
FLAP
I REPEAT : WE GO BACK DOWN
WE GO BACK THEM
ALL RIGHT, UNDERSTOOD.
BE CAREFUL ON THE RE-DESCENT
OK
Fwaaa

HASHISH
MARIJUANA
ALL THAT YOU WANT

500 RUPEES! 500!
CHEAP!

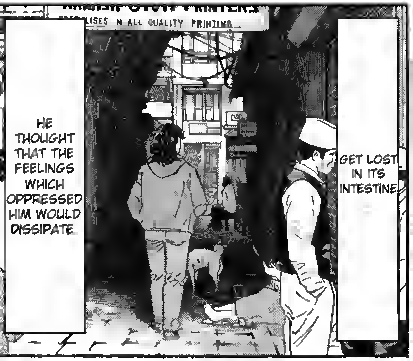

*HOINA!
CHEAP!
1000 RUPEES
YOU BUY ?

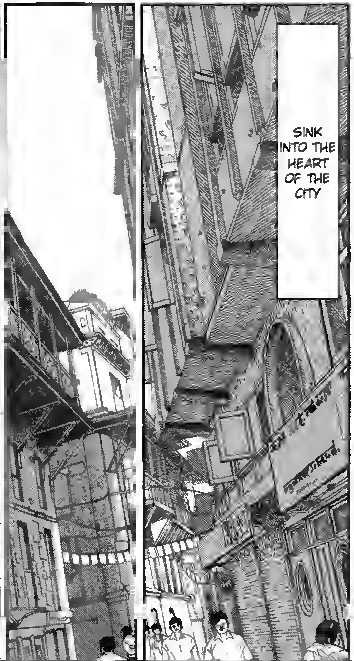
*NO


FUKAMACHI WAS WALKING AIMLESSLY

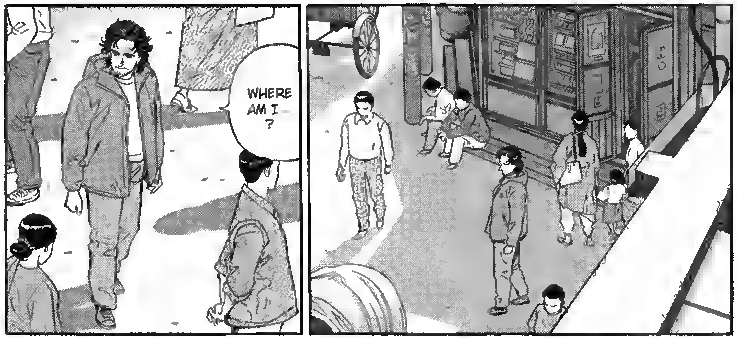
FUKAMICHI DIDN'T WANT TO STAY IN HIS ROOM TO RUMINATE HIS THOUGHTS
IN THE BEGINNING OF THE AFTERNOON, THE RAIN FINALLY STOPPED
IN JULY, WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE MONSOON, THE VALLEY OF KATHMANDU ENTERS THE RAIN SEASON

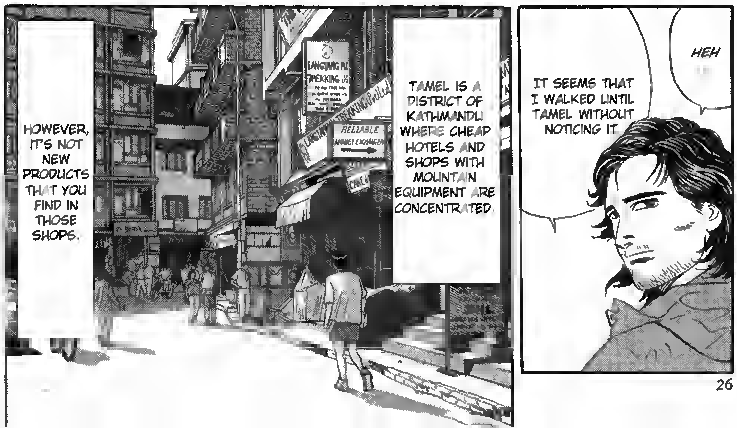
TO TAKE ROADS THAT HE HAD NOT TAKEN YET
HIS ONLY PURPOSE WAS TO ROAM IN THE STREETS OF THE CITY.


HE THOUGHT THAT THE FEELINGS WHICH OPPRESSED HIM WOULD DISSIPATE
GET LOST IN ITS INTESTINE


SINK INTO THE HEART OF THE CITY

A DEAD-END
AH...


WHERE AM I ?


HOWEVER, IT'S NOT NEW PRODUCTS THAT YOU FIND IN THOSE SHOPS.
TAMEL IS A DISTRICT OF KATHMANDU WHERE CHEAP HOTELS AND SHOPS WITH MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT ARE CONCENTRATED.
IT SEEMS THAT I WALKED UNTIL TAMEL WITHOUT NOTICING IT.
HEH

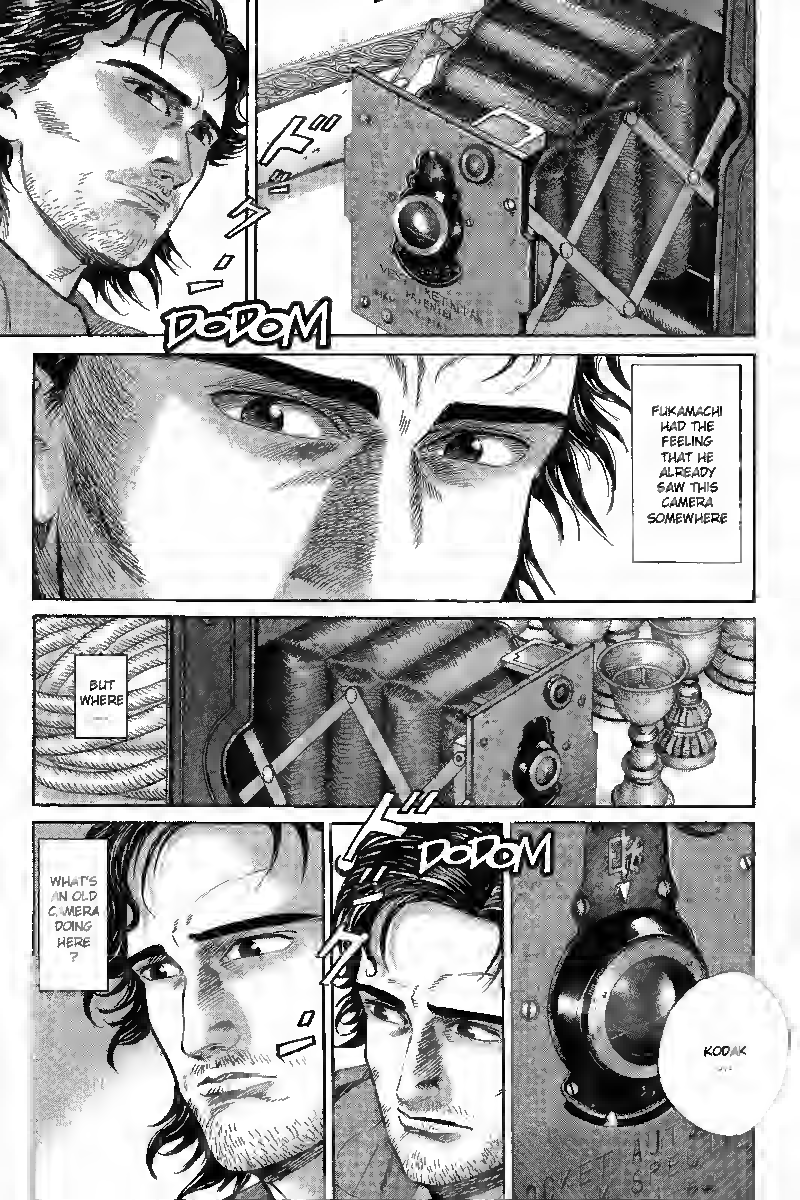
BRAABRAABRAAM
INDEED, FORTHEM WHO ARE CLOSE TO THE CLIMBERS, IT'S EASY TO STOCK UP
IT'S NOT RARE THAT *SHERPAS HOLD THOSE SHOPS
THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN LEFT BY THE EXPEDITIONS WHICH CAME FROM THE WHOLE WORLD TO CONQUER THE HIMALAYAS. ACQUIRED AT GOOD PRICES IT RESOLD SO EXPENSIVELY AS ABROAD

*GUIDE

SAGARMA
HIMALAYA
P O BOX
"SAGARMATHA"
IT'S THE NEPALESE NAME FOR EVEREST

FUKAMACHI DECIDED TO ENTER THIS SHOP
SAGARM
HIMALAYA
IS IT BECAUSE HE WAS ATTRACTED BY THE NAME ?

THE INSIDE OF THE SHOP WAS NOT VERY EN-LIGHTENED
THE SURLY MAN BEHIND THE COUNTER WASN'T A GUIDE BUT PROBABLY A CRETI
*NAMASTE'
*HI
IT SEEMS IT'S MORE AN ANTIQUE DEALERSHIP
RATHER THAN A SHOP OF MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT
HM...
OH...
NEXT TO OLD CORDS, BUDDHIST'S INSTRUMENTS WITH A DOUBTFUL AUTHENTICITY WERE DISPOSED.

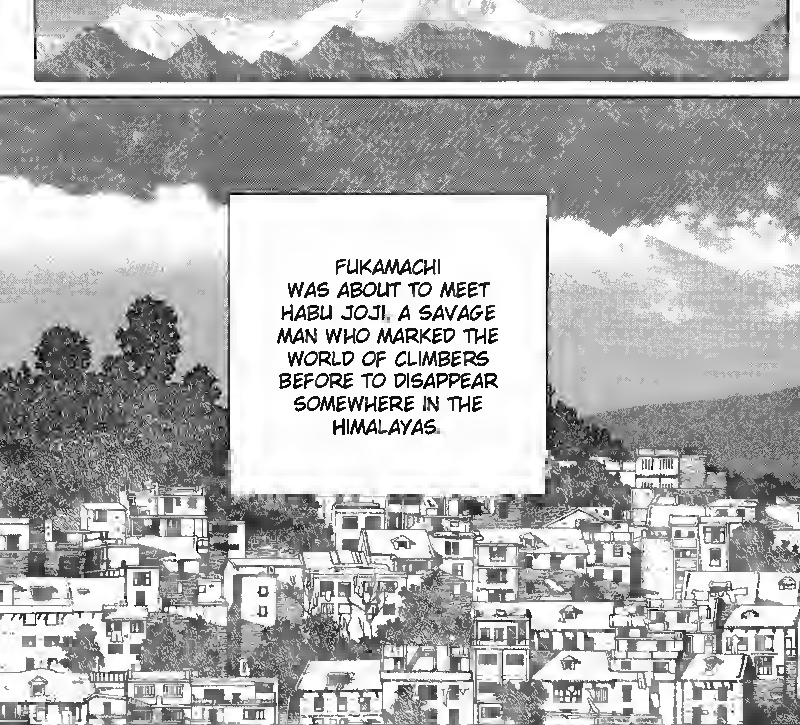

DODOM
FUKAMACHI HAD THE FEELING THAT HE ALREADY SAW THIS CAMERA SOMEWHERE
BUT WHERE
DODOM
WHAT'S AN OLD CAMERA DOING HERE?
KODAK

NO... COULD IT BE...
DOOM
ドゥーン
I SEE AND THINK ABOUT IT...
NOT BUY ?
JUST SEE ?
*TYO CAMERA DEKHALINOS ?
*CAN YOU SHOW ME THIS CAMERA?
KLIC
コト
tOk

•HOW MANY?
••CAN YOU PROPOSE ME A CHEAPER PRICE?

ゴ"ト
tok
NO, NO
NEW, 500¢, BROKEN, 200¢
...
I TAKE IT
OK!
150¢
FUKAMACHI DIDN'T SUSPECT ANYTHING
Carlsberg
Beer
COUNTRY ROAD
AH AH AH!!!
JAPANESE ALWAYS MAKE GOOD TRADES

SAGARMA
THIS CAMERA WOULD BRING HIM TO MEET SOMEONE
HE IGNORED THAT FEW DAYS LATER


FUKAMACHI WAS ABOUT TO MEET HABU JOJI, A SAVAGE MAN WHO MARKED THE WORLD OF CLIMBERS BEFORE TO DISAPPEAR SOMEWHERE IN THE HIMALAYAS.

Scanned by vensu
Translsated by kabuto- & vensu
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Checked by numeral

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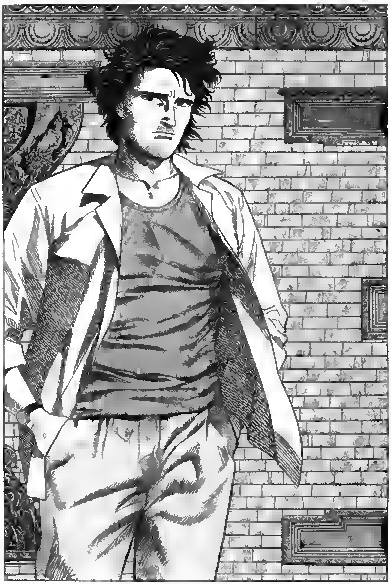
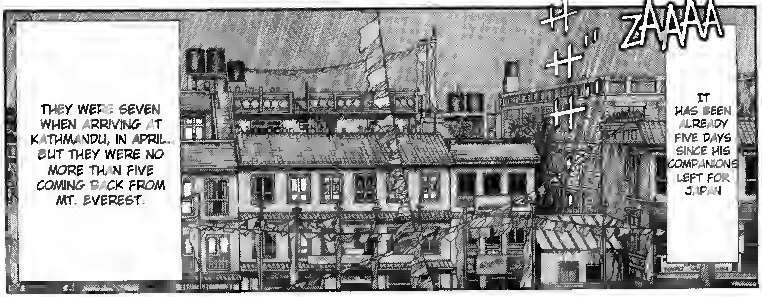


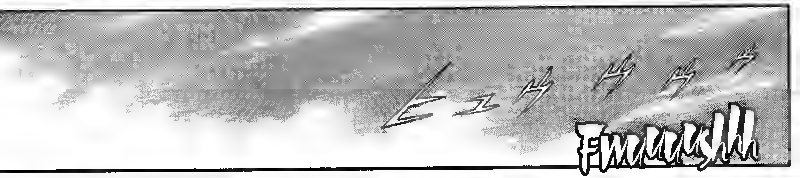
The town of all the dreams

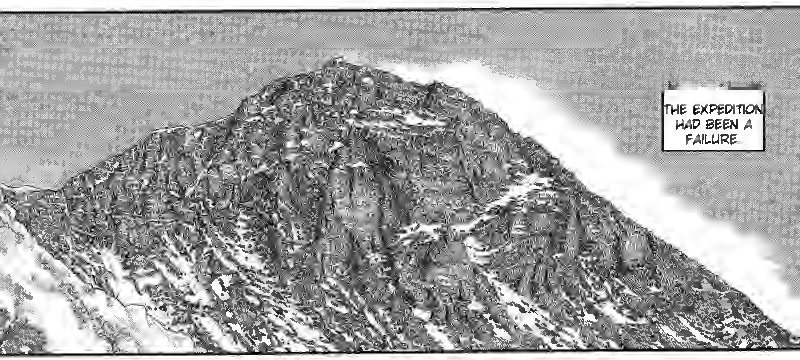
ZAAAAA
PFUUUU
GLOUB

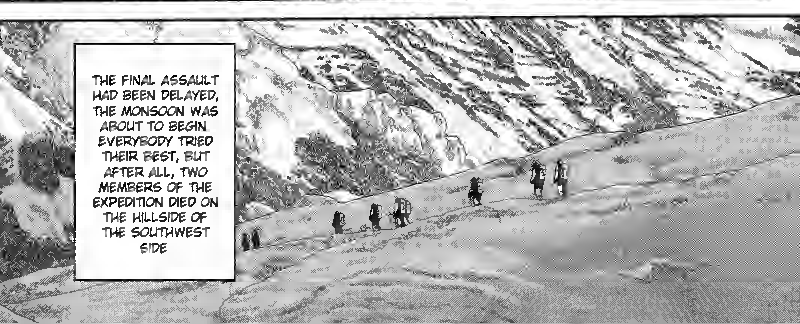
FWAP
TCHAK
IT'S REALLY INCREDIBLE
WHAT WAS SUCH AN OLD CAMERA DOING IN THIS SHOP ?
WHY TAKE THE TROUBLE TO BRING A SUCH ANTIQUITY TO THE MOUNTAINS ?
AND
ZAAAAAAA
IT'S NOT CONCEIVABLE THAT AN EXPEDITION BROUGHT IT TO MAKE SHOTS ...
UNLESS THE PHOTOGRAPHER WAS PASSIONATE ABOUT OLD MODELS.
IT'S NOT COMPLETELY IMPOSSIBLE
BUT IT REMAINS NOT VERY LIKELY

IT TURNS OUT THAT THIS CAMERA IS INDEED THE ONE I THINK IT IS
IF EVER
HE HAD TO WAIT FOR A CALL FROM JAPAN ABOUT THIS CAMERA
FUKA-MICHI WAITED
I'D HAVE REALLY BEEN FORTUNATE TO PROLONG MY STAY IN KATHMANDU!
ZAAAA
WHY DID HE CHOOSE TO STAY IN KATHMANDU, DURING THE RAIN SEASON?
BUT WHY ?


THEY WERE SEVEN WHEN ARRIVING AT KATHMANDU, IN APRIL.. BUT THEY WERE NO MORE THAN FIVE COMING BACK FROM MT. EVEREST.
ZAAAA
IT HAS BEEN ALREADY FIVE DAYS SINCE HIS COMPANIONS LEFT FOR JAPAN


Fwaaaahh


THE EXPEDITION HAD BEEN A FAILURE.

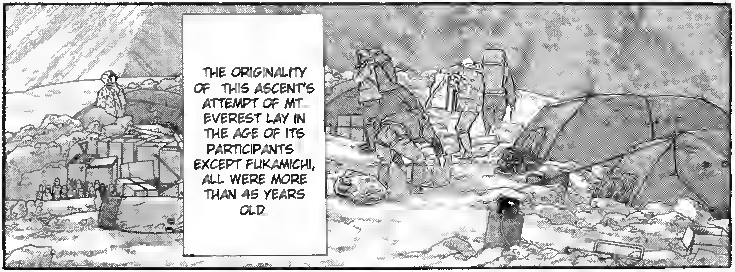

THE FINAL ASSAULT HAD BEEN DELAYED, THE MONSOON WAS ABOUT TO BEGIN. EVERYBODY TRIED THEIR BEST, BUT AFTER ALL, TWO MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITION DIED ON THE HILLSIDE OF THE SOUTHWEST SIDE

THE HEIGHT ASIDE, THE PLACE PRESENTED NO TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES.
HERE, FUNAJIMA
WE GO BACK DOWN, I REPEAT, WE GO BACK DOWN
Nikon
THEY HAD JUST GIVEN UP PURSUING THE ASCENT AND BEGAN TO COME DOWN, THEN THAT ACCIDENT OCCURRED.
UNFORTUNATELY
Fwuuush

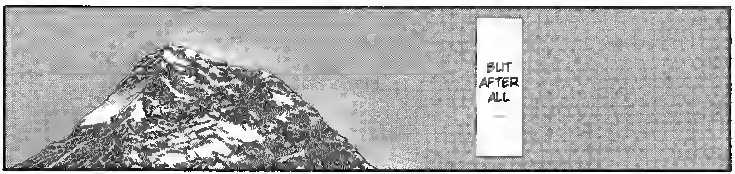
!
SHLAK
SHLAK

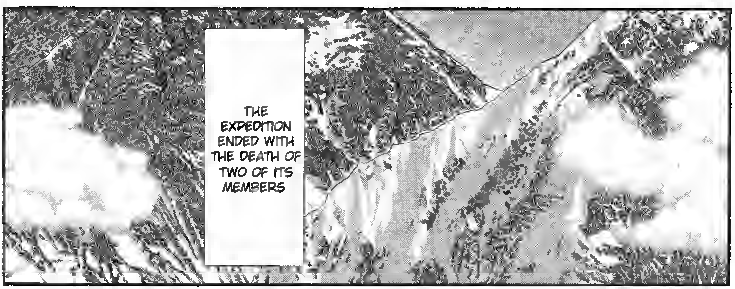
SHLAK
SHLAK
FORGETTING ALL THE REST FUKAMICHI PRESSED THE RELEASED MECHANISM OF HIS CAMERA
SHLAK
SHLAK

HE WAS NOT ABLE TO HEAR THE SHOUTS NOR DISTINGUISH THE SLIGHTEST EXPRESSION ON THEIR FACES
HE CAPTURED THEIR FALL IN A DOZEN LENS SHUTTER CLICKS
THE RED OF FUKAMICHI'S RUCKSACK HAD BECOME SOAKED IN HIS RETINAS
Nikon
ZAAAAA
THE MORE FUKAMICHI TRIED HARD TO FORGET THIS VIEW, THE MORE IT BECAME PRESENT IN HIS SPIRIT


THE ORIGINALITY OF THIS ASCENT'S ATTEMPT OF MT. EVEREST LAY IN THE AGE OF ITS PARTICIPANTS EXCEPT FUKAMICHI, ALL WERE MORE THAN 45 YEARS OLD

THAT WAS ENOUGH ORIGINALITY TO DRAW THE ATTENTION OF THE MEDIA
ONE WAS A DOCTOR, ANOTHER ONE WAS A EMPLOYEE AT A COMPANY, THE THIRD CONTROLLED A REAL ESTATE AGENCY, COMMON PEOPLE WHO ATTACKED THE HIGHEST SUMMIT OF THE WORLD

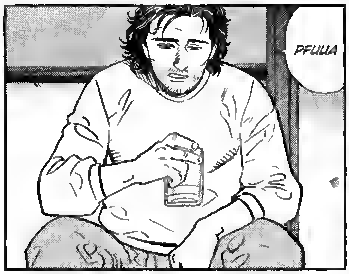

BUT AFTER ALL ...

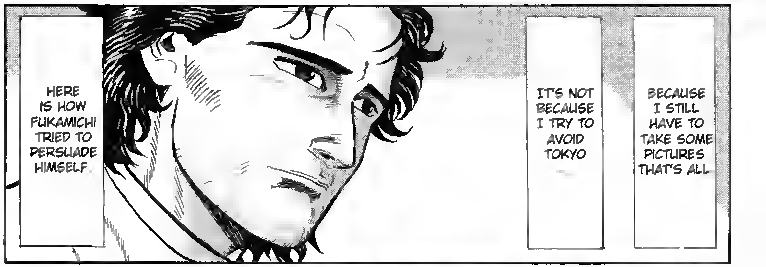

THE EXPEDITION ENDED WITH THE DEATH OF TWO OF ITS MEMBERS

KUDO-SAN
...
I'M REALLY SORRY
...
CALL ME WHEN YOU HAVE A MOMENT, WE SHALL GO DRINK A GLASS TOGETHER
TAKE CARE
ALL RIGHT
...
I'M GOING TO STAY ANOTHER FORTNIGHT
TO TAKE SOME PICTURES FOR AN PHOTO ALBUM BEFORE RETURNING TO TOKYO
IN THAT CASE, I'LL SEE YOU SOON
IN JAPAN
OK

GLOUB

WHY DID I DECIDE TO STAY IN NEPAL —?


PFUUA


HERE IS HOW FUKAMICHI TRIED TO PERSUADE HIMSELF.
IT'S NOT BECAUSE I TRY TO AVOID TOKYO
BECAUSE I STILL HAVE TO TAKE SOME PICTURES THAT'S ALL

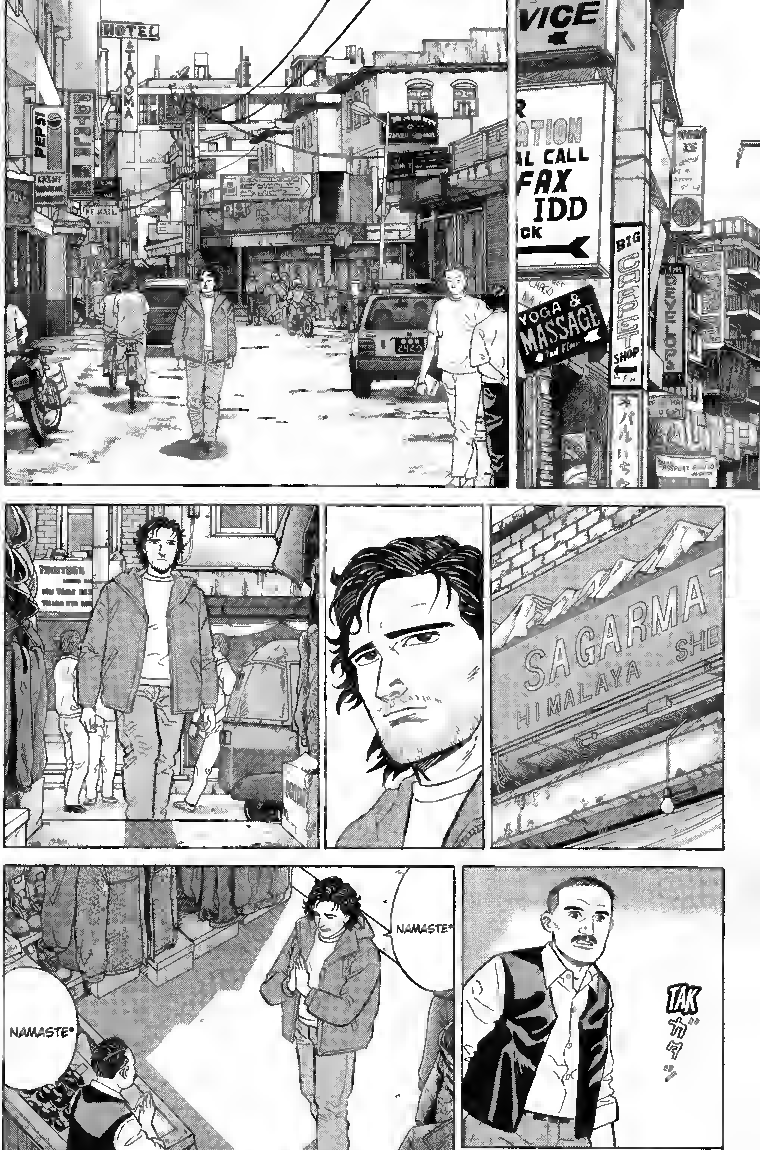
YES?
AH! FUKAMICHI-SAN?

TULULUU

I WAS WAITING FOR YOUR CALL DID YOU CHECK IT ?
YES, IT'S DONE
IT WAS REALLY THAT!
OH!
IT'S MIYAKAWA
VEST POCKET AUTOGRAPHIC KODAK SPECIAL
IT'S INDEED THE MODEL THAT MALORY HAD WITH HIM ON HIS ASSAULT OF MT EVEREST IN 1924
WHAT'S GOING ON, FUKAMICHI-SAN?
WHY ARE YOU SO INTERESTED IN THAT CAMERA SUDDENLY?
DID YOU FIND OUT SOMETHING INTERESTING ?
COUNTRY ROAD
THANKS AGAIN FOR YOUR HELP
ALL RIGHT

NO
I CAN'T TELL YOU SOMETHING AT THE MOMENT
OH! SO MUCH MYSTERY! COME ON, TELL ME WHAT'S ABOUT!
I HAVE TO PURSUE MY INVESTIGATION
BEFORE TO KNOW IF IT'S WORTH IT OR NOT
IT'S TOO SOON TO TELL
I'LL CALL YOU AGAIN IF I NEED OTHER INFORMATION
TRUST ME
YOU'LL BE THE FIRST I'LL CALL WHEN I HAVE SOMETHING CERTAIN
IT HAS TO BE REALLY SERIOUS FOR YOU TO CALL ME FROM NEPAL!
TCHAK
THANKS, SEE YOU SOON
AT YOUR SERVICE
OK
GEMS

DAMN ...
IT'S REALLY WHAT IT SEEMED TO ME ...
IF THIS CAMERA IS REALLY MALLORY'S ONE...
I TAKE A HOLD ON SOMETHING GREAT!
Fwoooshh
THIS DISCOVERY COULD ...
TOTALLY SHAKE UP THE HISTORY OF HIMALAYAN CLIMBING

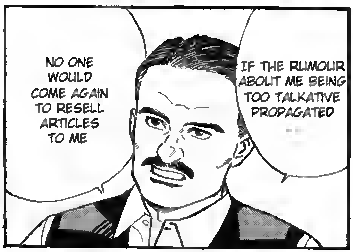

HOTEL
VICE
YOGA & MASSAGE
SHOP
SAGARMA
HIMALAYA
NAMASTE*
NAMASTE*
TAK
*HI

HE HOPED THAT HIS INTERLOCUTOR WOULD LISTEN TO HIS HESITANT ENGLISH
FUKAMACHI SPOKE IN ENGLISH
...
I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK YOU
IT'S ABOUT THE CAMERA I BOUGHT YESTERDAY
ABOUT THIS CAMERA ?
I'D LIKE TO KNOW SOMETHING
NO NO PROBLEM
THE SHOP OWNER ANSWERED IN ENGLISH AS WELL
WHAT'S GOING ON? PROBLEMS WITH THE MECHANISM ?
...
CAN YOU TELL ME WHO SOLD IT TO YOU?
OH
ABOUT ITS PREVIOUS OWNER
YEAH

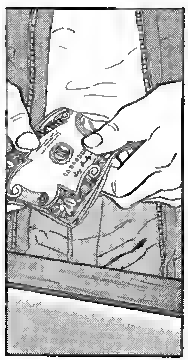
I'M SURE
THAT YOU UNDERSTAND ME

...
YOU KNOW, I CAN'T REMEMBER EVERYBODY
AND
EVEN IF I REMEMBERED IT, I COULDN'T TELL YOU

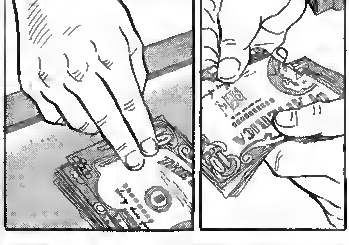
ALL RIGHT, I SEE
BUT I'M READY TO PAY FOR THIS SERVICE, YOU KNOW...
NO, NO.
IT'S NOT ABOUT MONEY

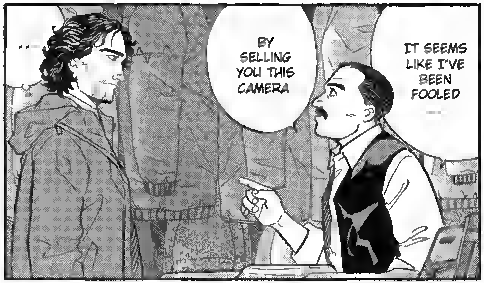

NO ONE WOULD COME AGAIN TO RESELL ARTICLES TO ME
IF THE RUMOUR ABOUT ME BEING TOO TALKATIVE PROPAGATED

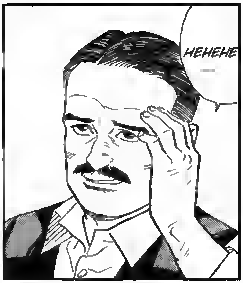
N...NO! IT'S NO USE TO INSIST
PLEASE



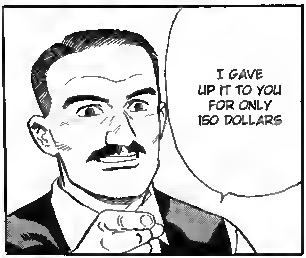
HEH YOU'RE SURPRISING ME
TSSS
THEN? YOU CAN INFORM ME?




BY SELLING YOU THIS CAMERA
IT SEEMS LIKE I'VE BEEN FOOLED


HEHEHE

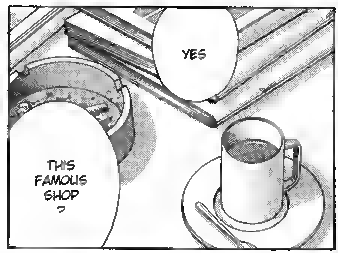
BUT, APPARENTLY, IT WAS WORTH MORE MONEY THAN WHAT I THOUGHT OF
ABOUT THAT, I STILL DON'T KNOW
THAT'S WHY I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHO BROUGHT IT TO YOU

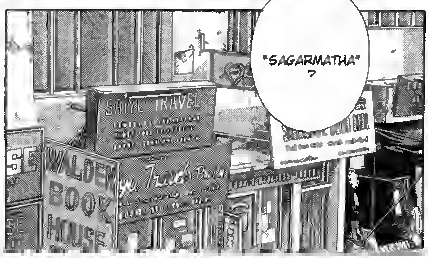

I GAVE UP IT TO YOU FOR ONLY 150 DOLLARS

WHAT IS SO SPECIAL, ABOUT THIS CAMERA ?
SAY
HUM
DO YOU ACCEPT TO TELL ME ?
...
BUT IT MEANS THAT THERE'S ALSO PEOPLE INTERESTED IN IT, LIKE YOU, FOR EXAMPLE
OH
NOTHING. FOR SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T HAVE INTEREST IN IT, IT'S JUST AN OLD CAMERA OUT OF USE
THEN HERE'S THE DEAL! YOU'RE GOING TO GIVE ME YOUR LOCATION, OK?
PERFECT!
WE CAN SAY THAT
HUM
HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU THINK YOU NEED TO REMEMBER SOMETHING ?
...
AND IF I'M ABLE TO REMEMBER SOMETHING, I'LL CALL YOU!
I'M GOING TO THINK ABOUT IT FOR A LITTLE BIT

HMM
MAYBE TODAY
OK!
ALL RIGHT
CALL THIS NUMBER
BY MEASURE OF SECURITY HE PREFERRED NOT TO REVEAL THE NAME OF HIS HOTEL
FUKAMICHI WROTE ON A PIECE OF PAPER THE PHONE NUMBER OF SAIYU TRAVEL, THE TRAVEL AGENCY WHICH TOOK CARE OF FUKAMICHI'S EXPEDITION
THAT'S FOR THE PHONE AND YOUR EXPENSES
YOU'LL HAVE THE REST OF THE MONEY WHEN YOUR MEMORY IS BACK
...
OK
IT'S CLEAR
JUST TELL HIM THAT YOU HAVE REMEMBERED SOMETHING
LEAVE A MESSAGE TO SOMEONE CALLED "SAITO"

AFTER LEAVING THE SHOP, FUKAMICHI WENT DIRECTLY TO THE AGENCY SAIYU TRAVEL
BYOOP
BYOOP
BYOOP
PAAA
YOENJI HOTEL


YES
THIS FAMOUS SHOP ?


"SAGARMATHA" ?
SAIYU TRAVEL
WALDEN BOOK HOUSE

IT'S MANI KUMAR, A CHHETI, WHO IS THE SHOP OWNER
YOU DID NOT HAVE PROBLEM WITH HIM AT LEAST?
NO, NO, IT'S OK.

DO YOU KNOW IT, SAITO-SAN ?

OH YES!
IT'S THE SHOP WHICH SELLS EVERYTHING AND ANYTHING, FROM MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT TO SOUVENIRS, AND SOME BUDDHIST OBJECTS.

MAN! KUMAR IS NOT ASHAMED OF MAKING TRADES WITH STOLEN GOODS...
THAT CARRIERS STOLE FROM EXPEDITIONS WHICH THEIR ACCOMPANY.
DRAGON HANDICRAFTS
CRAFT SHOP
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH...
IT'S NOT ONLY MATERIAL BROUGHT BACK BY CLIMBERS THAT IS FOR SALE OVER THERE.
A FRENCH EXPEDITION FROM WHICH SOME MATERIAL WAS STOLEN, FOUND IT IN "SAGARMATHA".
HE YES... I DON'T REMEMBER EXACTLY WHEN THAT TOOK PLACE.
STOLEN GOODS ?
WHAT ?!
IT'S A STORY WHICH MADE LITTLE NOISE AT THAT TIME
BE CAREFUL, FUKAMICHI-SAN
I NEVER HEAR ANYTHING GOOD ABOUT THIS SHOP

NO.
NOTHING REALLY IMPORTANT
YOU DON'T HAVE ANY PARTICULAR RELATION WITH MANI KUMAR, I HOPE?
WELL! SAITO-SAN...
CALL ME IF YOU RECEIVE A MESSAGE
I'LL BE BACK TO MY HOTEL AT THE END OF THIS AFTERNOON IF EVER
ALL RIGHT.
YOU CAN COUNT ON ME!
BEFORE GOING TO HIS HOTEL, FUKAMICHI VISITED FEW LIBRARIES

"THE MYSTERY OF MALLORY AND IRVINE"
Mallory and Irvine
BOOK SHOP
BUY 'N' SALE
IT'S IN THE THIRD LIBRARY THAT HE FOUND WHAT HE WAS LOOKING FOR...
A BOOK FROM TOM HOLZEL, WRITTEN IN COLLABORATION WITH AUDREY SALKED. A DEEP INVESTIGATION ON THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MALLORY DURING HIS ASCENT'S ATTEMPT OF MT. EVEREST
ZAAAAA

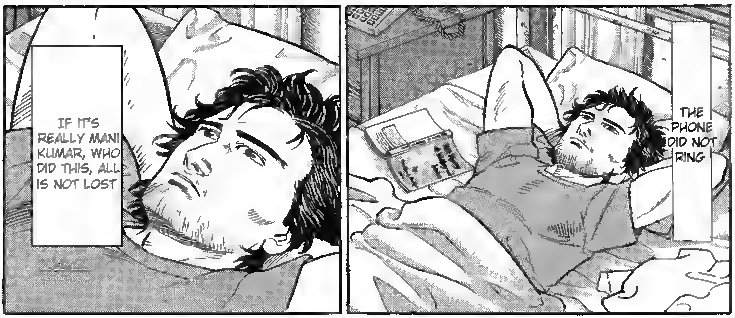
BOM
HEY!
HOTEL SUGAT
HOTEL SUGAT
PFUU
BACK IN THIS ROOM, FUKAMICHI WAS SUDDENLY FEELING WORRIED ABOUT THE CAMERA THAT HE LEFT IN HIS RUCKSACK

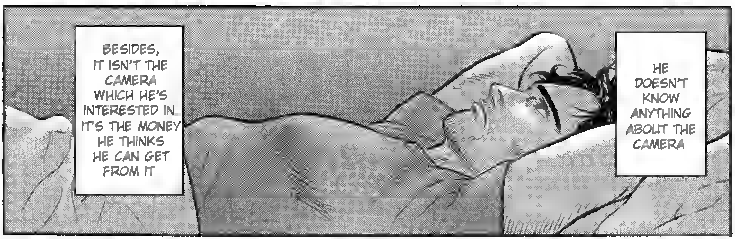
A BAD FEELING
HMM?
ZIIP
COULD IT BE WHAT HE FEARED OF? A SHUDDER WENT THROUGH HIS SPINE
FROSH
FROSH
FROSH
THE BAG IN WHICH THE CAMERA WAS WRAPPED SEEMED ABNORMALLY LIGHT TO HIM.
I'VE BEEN FOOLED.

VLAM
FLAP
SHIT!
IT CAN BE ONLY HIM WHO IS BEHIND THE THEFT
THE BANDIT
FWAP
MANI KUMAR
FUKAMICHI HADN'T IMAGINED A SINGLE MOMENT IN WHICH SOMEONE WOULD HAVE STOLEN THE CAMERA FROM HIM, ESPECIALLY NOT IN SUCH A SHORT AMOUNT OF TIME
MANI KUMAR WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO KNEW ABOUT THE CAMERA

IT WAS ENOUGH TO CALL ALL THE ESTABLISHMENTS WHERE A JAPANESE WAS LIKELY TO STAY
AND WE WERE IN KATHMANDU
AFTER ALL, HE GAVE HIS NAME TO MANI KUMAR
BUT HOW DID HE FIND THIS HOTEL?
IT'S NOT A PALACE WELL GUARDED LIKE YOU CAN FIND IN JAPAN
THEN, HE JUST NEEDED TO BRIBE A BOY OR A CHAMBERMAID NOTHING MORE EASY FOR MANI KUMAR
I DON'T HAVE ANY PROOF ...
IT'S NOT LIKELY THAT WAY I'LL BE ABLE TO GET BACK THE CAMERA
I COULD DECLARE THE THEFT TO THE POLICE, BUT
IT'S JUST AN ESTABLISHMENT WITH A SANITARY SYSTEM AND WITH BADLY MAINTAINED SHOWERS

THE NIGHT HAD BEEN LONG
ZAAAA


IF IT'S REALLY MANI KUMAR, WHO DID THIS, ALL IS NOT LOST
THE PHONE DID NOT RING

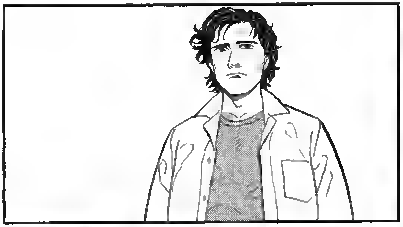

BESIDES, IT ISN'T THE CAMERA WHICH HE'S INTERESTED IN. IT'S THE MONEY HE THINKS HE CAN GET FROM IT
HE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE CAMERA

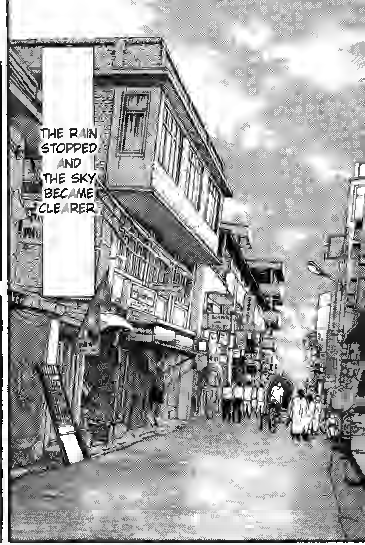
HE MAY CONTACT ME
THEREFORE
THERE IS PROBABLY NOT SO MANY PEOPLE WHO CAN BE ABLE TO SEE THE RELATION BETWEEN MALLORY AND THIS OLD KODAK
THE Mystery of Mallory and Parker
Mallory Stanley

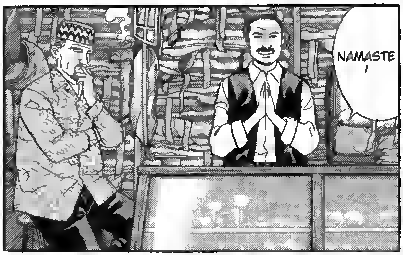
IMPOSSIBLE TO SLEEP
UH...
ZAAAAA
ZAAAA
THE DARKNESS THAT HE WAS SEEING IN HIS INSOMNIA
WAS THE ONE WHICH STAGNATED IN THE DEPTHS OF HIMSELF
UUH
Fwoooooosshh

THEN GO AHEAD, SINCE YOU'RE SO EAGER ABOUT IT
YOU'RE FREE TO DO AS YOU WISH!
LIVE YOUR LIFE AS YOU WISH, I CAN'T ASK FOR MORE!
LIKE THAT, ME TOO, I'LL LIVE MINE AS I WISH. IT'S BETTER, ISN'T IT?
ZAAAAA
TAKEN BY THE FATIGUE, HE FELT LIKE NAPPING.
HIS BODY SANK INTO HIS BED, BUT HIS SLEEP WAS LIGHT, STICKY.

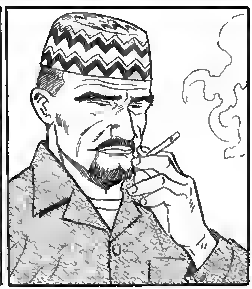
FUKAMICHI DIDN'T LEAVE HIS ROOM ALL DAY LONG
SHAAAA
THE NEXT DAY IT WAS RAINING
BUT COULDN'T FIND ANYTHING
HE SEARCHED FOR LONG
THE Mystery of Mallory and Irvine
THE PHONE RANG AT 3PM
BROOOOM




THE RAIN STOPPED AND THE SKY BECAME CLEARER


NAMASTE !

WHAT? YOU'RE LEAVING ?
I'M GLAD THAT YOU CALLED ME BEFORE I WENT BACK TO JAPAN!


AH!

YES
DID YOU REMEMBER ANYTHING ?
TAKE A SEAT

IN THAT CASE
YES. I THOUGHT I HAD TO LEAVE KATHMANDU WITHOUT ANY NEWS FROM YOU.
THERE'S NO TIME TO WASTE

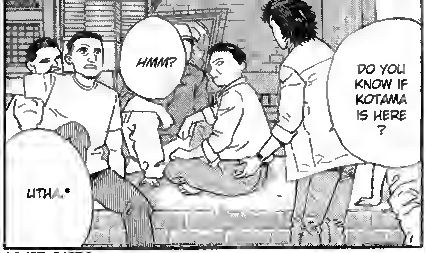
THIS MAN IS NARADAR RASENDRA
HE OFTEN BRINGS ME HIS DISCOVERIES IN ORDER FOR ME TO RESELL THEM.
THEN, COULD YOU EXPLAIN ME HOW THIS CAMERA ENDED UP IN YOUR CUSTODY ?
REALLY ?
IT'S HIM WHO BROUGHT ME THAT CAMERA
TO TELL THE TRUTH
A GURUNG ?
YES
I BELIEVE HE'S WORKING AS A CARRIER ON THE ROAD OF MT. EVEREST.
A GURUNG MAN CAME TO SEE ME IT WAS HIM WHO OWNED THE CAMERA
IT WAS A SEVERAL DAYS AGO

HE CAME TO SELL ME VARIOUS OBJECTS
WITH THEM, THERE WAS THIS OLD CAMERA
DID HE TELL YOU HOW HE GOT IT ?
KOTAMA SAID...
THAT SOMEONE GAVE IT TO HIM
GAVE IT?
YES
APPARENTLY
IT WAS A JAPANESE LIKE YOU
A JAPANESE ?
WHAT'S HIS NAME ?
I DON'T KNOW
BUT HE COMES UP TO HERE TO WORK
SINCE HE DIDN'T HAVE A WORK THERE, HE DECIDED TO COME TO KATHMANDU TO BE A CARRIER
I MUST MEET THIS KOTAMA WHERE DOES HE LIVE?
SHIVA EXPORTS & MOVERS
HIS HOUSE IS AT POKHARA
IS THAT SO ?
IT MEANS THAT HE'S HERE?
SHIVA CARGO SERVICE

WHAT DO YOU MEAN ?
HE'S MOST LIKELY PLAYING HIS MONEY
IT'S CLOSE
TELL ME WHERE I CAN FIND HIM.
CE TAINLY
WHERE DO THEY DO THAT ?
BUT, MOST OF THEM, PLAY THEIR PAY BY DOING BETS
GENERALLY, WHEN THEY DON'T HAVE WORK ANYMORE, CARRIERS GO BACK TO THEIR VILLAGES
THEY SET UP THEMSELVES UNDER THE OVER-HAND OF SHIVA AND PARVATI'S TEMPLE, ON DURBAR PLACE
WELL, GENERALLY
ASK WHERE YOU CAN FIND HIM, SOMEONE WILL CERTAINLY BE ABLE TO TELL YOU
IF YOU DON'T FIND HIM THERE

DIDN'T THEY TALK A LITTLE BIT TOO SPONTANEOUSLY ?
WHAT ARE THEY UP TO ?
MANI KUMAR AND NARADAR RASENDRA
KATHMANDU IS NOT A SAFE PLACE ANYMORE
IF IT'S NOT MONEY BUT AN OBJECT THAT WAS STOLEN FROM YOU I MAY BE ABLE TO HELP YOU TO FIND IT.
IT SEEMS LIKE THERE ARE MORE AND MORE THIEVES.
...

I THINK I KNOW WHO TO ASK TO INFILTRATE THIS CLANDESTINE MARKET.
THEY STEAL OBJECTS ONLY BECAUSE THEY CAN GET MONEY IN EXCHANGE.
WHAT THEY WANT, IT'S MONEY.
YOU KNOW, IT'S NOT THE MATERIAL GOODS THAT INTEREST THIEVES
I SHALL REMEMBER IT
...
SOME STOLEN OBJECTS END UP IN MY SHOP
EVEN SOME-TIMES, IT HAPPENS THAT
FLAP
FLAP


HMM?
DO YOU KNOW IF KOTAMA IS HERE ?
UITHA.*

*OVER THERE

SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOU

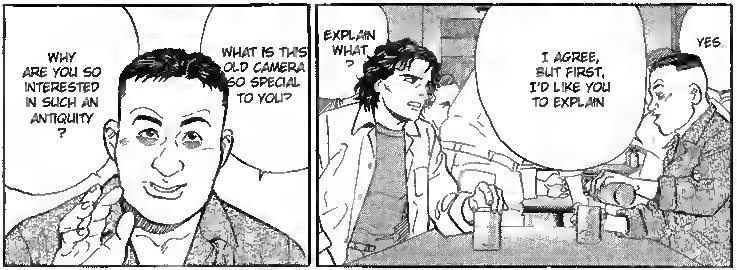
EXCUSE ME...
WHICH ONE OF YOU IS KOTAMA ?

Y... YES
I HAVE FEW QUESTIONS TO ASK TO YOU ABOUT AN OLD CAMERA THAT YOU SOLD TO NARADAR RASENDRA
YOU DID SAY THAT IT WAS A JAPANESE WHO GAVE IT TO YOU?

...
IT'S YOU, KOTAMA ?
SAY

CAN YOU TELL ME HIS NAME ?
NO NO
DO YOU KNOW HIM ? WAS IT HIM WHO ASKED YOU TO COME ?
I DON'T KNOW IT.
BUT HIS JAPANESE NAME?
BIKHALU SANH?
BIKHALU SANH.
INDEED
OK.
I'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING, BUT NOT HERE, LET'S GO TALK SOMEWHERE ELSE.
...
I DON'T KNOW HIM BY ANY OTHER NAME.
EVERYBODY CALLED HIM BIKHALU SANH.
IT'S THIS CAMERA WHICH INTERESTED YOU, RIGHT ?
HMM ...

PWAAH !!!
I'M LISTENING
TELL ME ABOUT THIS JAPANESE AND WHY HE GAVE YOU THIS CAMERA
GLOUB GLOUB
RESTHANT PUB

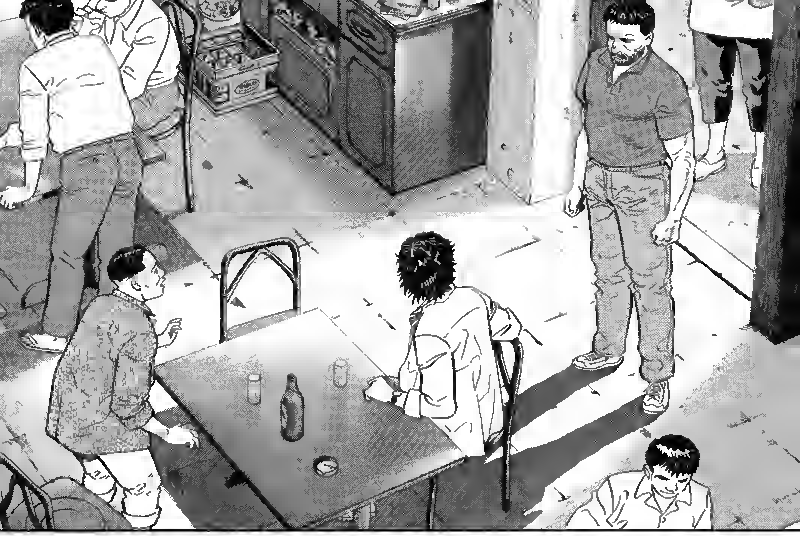

WHY ARE YOU SO INTERESTED IN SUCH AN ANTIQUITY ?
WHAT IS THIS OLD CAMERA SO SPECIAL TO YOU?
EXPLAIN WHAT ?
I AGREE, BUT FIRST, I'D LIKE YOU TO EXPLAIN
YES

HE WAS TRYING TO FIND OUT THE SECRET OF THE CAMERA
KOTAMA WAS WORKING WITH THE TWO OTHERS
EVERY-THING BECAME CLEAR FOR FUKA-MICHI
THE INSTANT KOTAMA ASKED THIS QUESTION

I ASKED YOU A QUESTION FIRST.
ANSWER NOW.
EVERYTHING IS CLEAR NOW. THAT'S WHY MANI KUMAR AND NARADAR RASENDRA TOLD EVERYTHING SO SPONTANEOUSLY
THAT, YOU'LL HAVE IT AFTER ANSWERING MY QUESTION !
BAM
...
ALL RIGHT
IF I TALK, YOU'LL TELL ME, RIGHT ?
WELL, I TOLD YOU, SOMEONE GAVE IT TO ME
THAT, I UNDERSTAND
WHAT I WANT TO KNOW, IS WHO IS THIS "BIKHALU SANH" AND WHERE DOES HE LIVE!
DOM
ヒケー!!

...
STAK
SUDDENLY A MUSKY SMELL FILLED THE ROOM
BI...
BIHKALU
SANH
BI...
BI...
WHAT'S GOING ON?
HEY!

BIKHALU SANH...
THE MAN WHO WAS NICKNAMED "THE POISONOUS SNAKE" WAS STANDING HERE.



MAY I ?

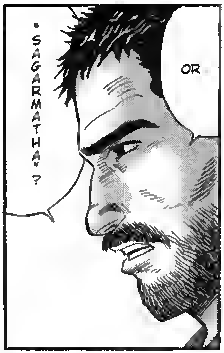
OF COURSE, GO AHEAD
I HAVE TO TALK WITH THIS MAN
IT WAS WITH A DETACHED ACCENT THAT HE SPOKE THOSE FEW WORDS, HIS VOICE WAS LOW, BUT IT WAS INDEED IN CONFIDENT JAPANESE THAT HE EXPRESSED HIMSELF

THEN, KOTAMA ...
AFTER "THE POISONOUS SNAKE", AN OLD MAN WHO SEEMED TO BE A SHERPA, ENTERED THE RESTAURANT.
BLAM
IT SOUNDED INTERESTING, WHAT YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT!
HOW MUCH DID YOU GAIN FOR IT?
HEHEHE
...
WHEN I GAVE YOU THIS CAMERA ?
CAN YOU REMIND ME...
WHAT MISERY !
3000 RUPEES
3... 3000 RUPEES* ...
HE EXPRESSED HIMSELF IN FLUID NEPALESE.
...
I ASKED YOU A QUESTION! HOW MUCH DID YOU GAIN FOR IT?
*AROUND 60 EUROS / 45 USD

WHERE DID YOU GO? "SHAKTI" ?

N... NO, I...
IT WAS A WISE MERCHANT THAT YOU DEALT WITH...
THE CAMERA, THE COWBELLS AND THE STATUETTES ONLY FOR 3000 RUPEES ?

AH...
IT LOOKS LIKE I'VE GUESSED RIGHT
HUM!


"SAGARMATHA" ?
OR...

HOW MUCH DO YOU HAVE WITH YOU NOW? SHOW ME!

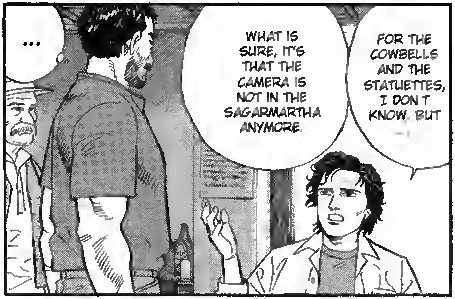
BE MERCIFUL, DON'T DO THAT TO ME
LILIH...
SO YOU REALLY WENT TO SEE MANI KUMAR

IT SEEMED LIKE YOU WERE LUCKY AT GAMES THIS TIME
DON'T MAKE ME SEARCH IN YOUR POCKETS
HURRY UP!
PFFF
TOO BAD. YOU SHOULD HAVE GONE BACK TO POKHARA AS SOON AS YOU COULD
HE TRIED TO REMEMBER
FUKAMICHI HAD THE FEELING THAT HE KNEW THIS MAN
I GIVE YOU BACK THE REMAINING MONEY
THERE
3000 RUPEES
HE HAD THE FEELING THAT HE SAW HIM SOME-WHERE, A LONG TIME AGO

I HOPE THAT ALL THE OBJECTS THAT YOU STOLE ARE STILL WITH MANI KUMAR!
GOOD!
...

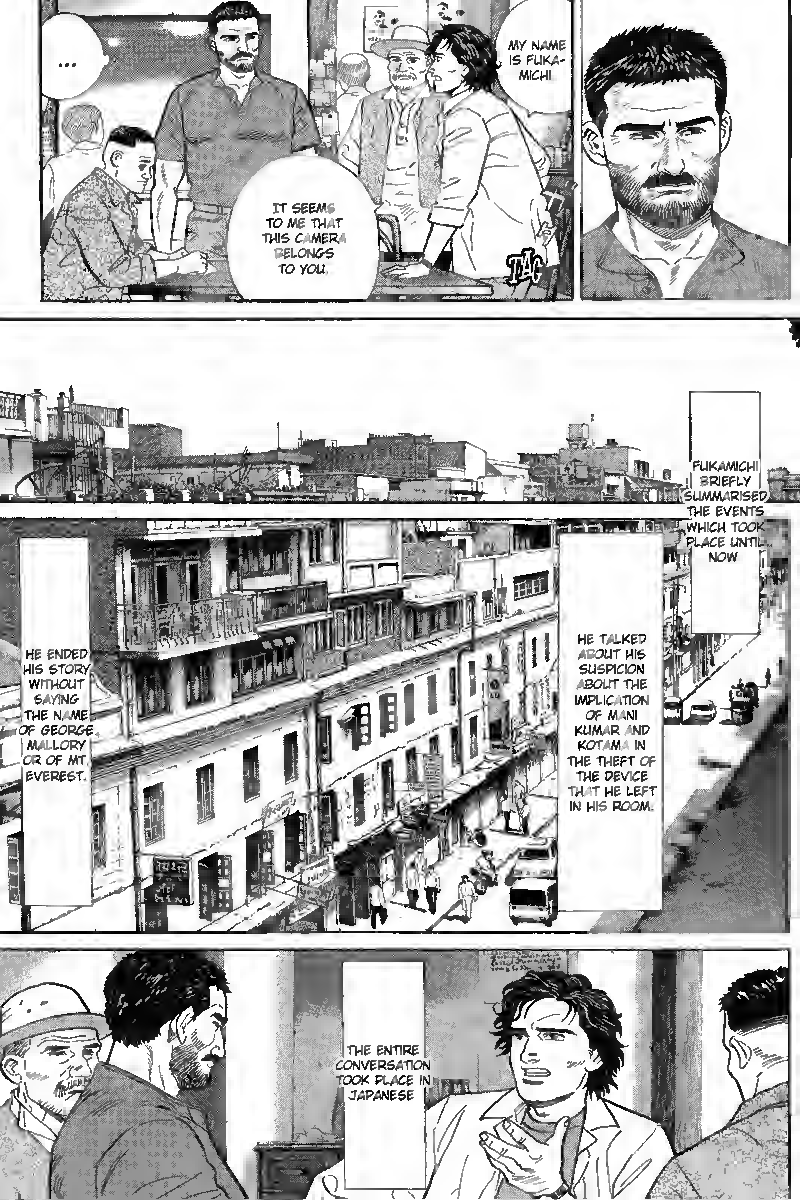
...
I DON'T THINK SO.
ALAS

A VEST POCKET AUTOMATIC KODAK SPECIAL.


...
WHAT IS SURE, IT'S THAT THE CAMERA IS NOT IN THE SAGARMARTHA ANYMORE.
FOR THE COWBELLS AND THE STATUETTES, I DON'T KNOW. BUT

I MADE A SMALL INVESTI-GATION.
HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT MUCH ?

A MODEL MARKETED IN 1924


...
IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THIS CAMERA BELONGS TO YOU.
MY NAME IS FUKAMICHI.
FUKAMICHI BRIEFLY SUMMARISED THE EVENTS WHICH TOOK PLACE UNTIL NOW.
HE TALKED ABOUT HIS SUSPICION ABOUT THE IMPLICATION OF MANI KUMAR AND KOTAMA IN THE THEFT OF THE DEVICE THAT HE LEFT IN HIS ROOM.
HE ENDED HIS STORY WITHOUT SAYING THE NAME OF GEORGE MALLORY OR OF MT EVEREST.
THE ENTIRE CONVERSATION TOOK PLACE IN JAPANESE

THUS, IT'S FOR THAT THAT YOU'RE HERE
I SEE
...
I UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS MAN STOLE THE CAMERA FROM YOU, BUT HOW DID THAT HAPPEN ?
YOU DON'T WANT TO TELL ME ?
FUKAMICHI-SAN
NEW MISE
YOU WERE PART OF THIS JAPANESE EXPEDITION WHO DID AN ASCENT ATTEMPT OF MT EVEREST DURING SPRING?
YES
THEN, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT, AS THE SAME TIME AN ENGLISH EXPEDITION WAS IN THE BASE CAMP
EXACTLY
THEY GOT BACK FROM THE CAMP AROUND 5 DAYS BEFORE US.
KOTAMA WAS AMONG THE CARRIERS WHO WERE CALLED IN AS REINFORCEMENTS TO BRING BACK DOWN ENGLISH'S EQUIPMENT.
INDEED.
THEY ALSO FAILED

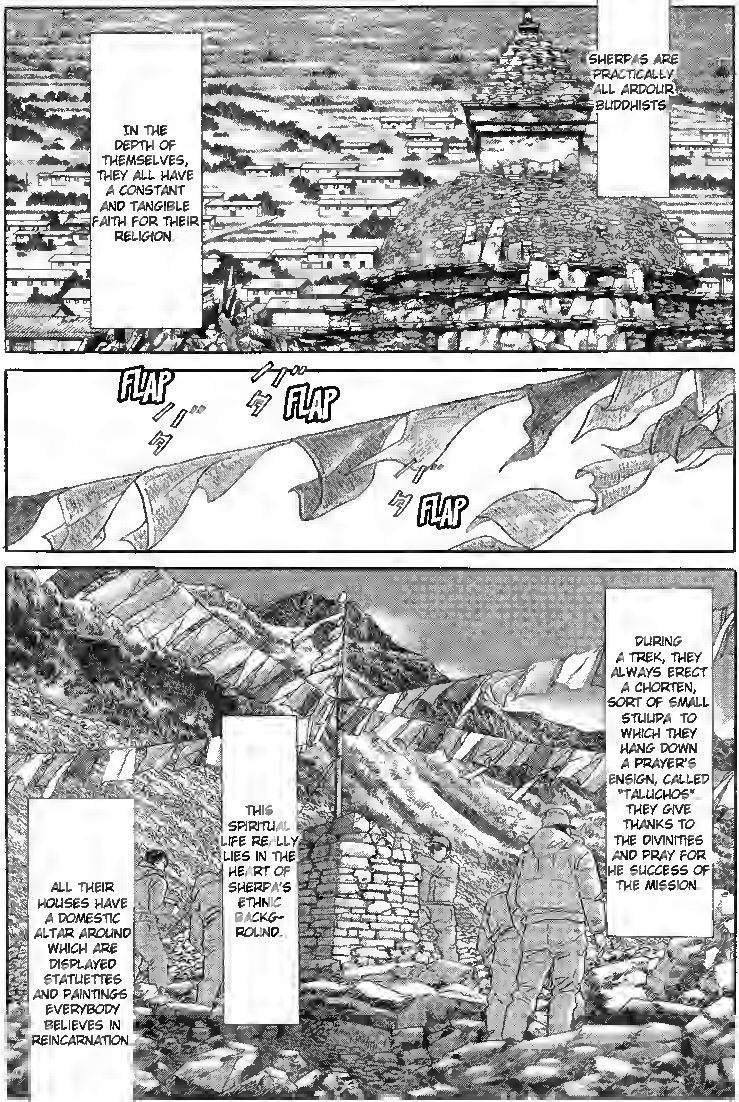
THEY STOPPED BY A SHERPA THAT I KNEW, WHO GENTLY AUTHORISED THAT WE INSTALL AN ACCLIMATION CAMP FOR KOTAMA ON HIS LAND.
AH! HE MAKES A GOOD CARRIER !
BUT, UPON ARRIVING AT THE CAMP, HE WAS COMPLETELY KNOCKED-OUT BY MOUNTAIN SICKNESS.
CAUSE THEY COULDN'T DO ANYTHING ELSE, THE SIRDAR* BROUGHT HIM BACK DOWN
*THE MOST EXPERIENCED OF THE SHERPA
BUT HOW DID THIS CAMERA END UP IN YOUR CUSTODY ?
ALL RIGHT, I SEE
AND HE BROUGHT WITH HIM, THE COW-BELLS, THE BUDDHIST'S STATUETTES AND THE CAMERA THAT WERE IN THE SHERPA'S HOUSE.
BUT THE NEXT DAY, OUR GUY HAD DISAPPEARED
BUT I'VE ALREADY SAID TOO MUCH
GWISH
...
I ACCEPTED TO TELL YOU ABOUT THE CAMERA SINCE I INTERRUPTED YOUR CONVERSATION WITH KOTAMA
SORRY, BUT I STOP THERE

FUKAMICHI WAS SURE HE KNEW THIS MAN
...
BUT HE NEVER MET HIM BEFORE.
HE HAD LIKELY SEEN HIM FROM FAR
SOMEWHERE
...
UNLESS IT WAS ON A PHOTO
...
HE FELT, THAT SOMEWHERE IN HIS MEMORY, A THREAD WAS ABOUT TO BECOME LOOSE

IT'S MANI KUMAR, HE PAID SOMEONE FROM THE HOTEL TO DO IT!
THE MAN IN RONT OF YOU THREATENED TO COMPLAIN TO THE POLICE
SPEAK, KOTAMA !
NO! I DID NOTHING !
HERE!
WHAT INTERESTS ME NOW, IS TO KNOW WHERE THE CAMERA IS!
IT MEANS THAT IT'S MANI KUMAR WHO HAS THE CAMERA ?!
IN THAT CASE ...
IT'S MANI KUMAR WHO ASKED ME TO INTERROGATE THE JAPANESE TO KNOW WHY HE WAS SO INTERESTED IN THE CAMERA
IT'S... IT'S THE TRUTH!
BE AREFUL IF YOU'RE LYING!
STAND UP KOTAMA!
DIRECTION "SAGAMARTHA" !!
Y... YES ...
I THINK SO...

AND A KIT OF STATUETTES
A CAMERA, SOME COW-BELLS
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BUY ?
VERY WELL, BUT
HERE'S SOME MONEY
EXCUSE ME...
?
THEN, IT'S REALLY YOU WHO STOLE THE CAMERA IN MY ROOM, ISN'T IT ?!
I'LL SEE IF I HAVE SOMETHING WITH THAT PRICE..
GOOD.

GO AHEAD, KOTAMA
I DON'T KNOW HIM
YOU MUST HAVE MADE A MISTAKE
REPEAT WHAT YOU SAID TO US FEW MINUTES AGO
MAY I KNOW WHO TOLD YOU SOMETHING LIKE THIS ?
COME ON...
UH ...
HIM!
IT'S A SERIOUS MATTER TO STEAL A SHERPA'S RELIGIOUS INSTRUMENT, YOU KNOW THAT.
AHEM ...
YOU WON'T EVER FIND A JOB AS A CARRIER ON THE KHUMBU, NEITHER ELSEWHERE.
I'LL MAKE IT VERY CLEAR FOR YOU THAT IF YOU ANGER THE SHERPAS
THE OLD SHERPA SUDDENLY SPOKE


SHERPAS ARE PRACTICALLY ALL ARDOUR BUDDHISTS.
IN THE DEPTH OF THEMSELVES, THEY ALL HAVE A CONSTANT AND TANGIBLE FAITH FOR THEIR RELIGION.
FLAP
FLAP
FLAP
DURING A TREK, THEY ALWAYS ERECT A CHORTEN, SORT OF SMALL STUPA TO WHICH THEY HANG DOWN A PRAYER'S ENSIGN, CALLED "TALUCHOS". THEY GIVE THANKS TO THE DIVINITIES AND PRAY FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE MISSION.
THIS SPIRITUAL LIFE REALLY LIES IN THE HEART OF SHERPA'S ETHNIC BACKGROUND.
ALL THEIR HOUSES HAVE A DOMESTIC ALTAR AROUND WHICH ARE DISPLAYED STATUETTES AND PAINTINGS EVERYBODY BELIEVES IN REINCARNATION.

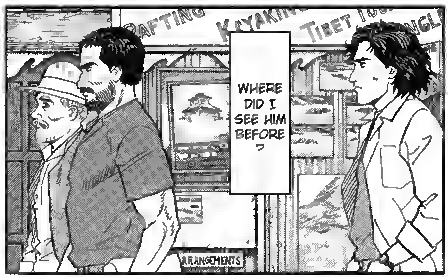
A LANDSLIDE OF STONES COULD SWOOP DOWN ON YOU WHILE YOU WALK
UNLESS A ROCK COLLAPSES UNDER YOUR FEET
UUH ...
IF, BY CHANCE ...
SOME-ONE GIVES YOU A JOB, BE CAREFUL.
WHO IS THIS KIND PERSON ?
ERR ...
NOT THAT !
NO!
IT'LL BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU TO BE A CARRIER IF THIS BUSINESS IS TAKEN BY THE POLICE.
EITHER WAY ...
ANG TSHERING ...
ANG TSHERING ...

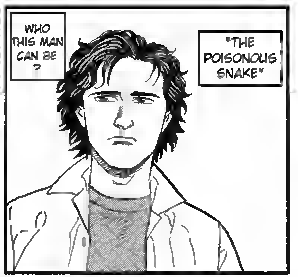
ANG TSHERING ...
THE MEMORY DIDN'T COME BACK CLEARLY BUT IT WAS A NAME THAT HE ASSOCIATED WITH THE HIMALAYA'S STORY...
IT WAS NOT THE FIRST TIME HE HEARD IT.
FUKAMICHI REPEATED THIS NAME IN HIS MIND.
WASN'T IT THE NAME OF A FAMOUS SHERPA WHO REACHED THE SUMMIT OF MT. EVEREST TWO TIMES AND MANY OTHER SUMMITS HIGHER THAN 8000 METERS ?
GIVE US WHAT WE CAME TO GET, MANI KUMAR
UNLESS YOU PREFER THAT WE GO TO SEE THE POLICE WITH OUR FRIEND ?
...
HEHEHE ...
ANG TSHERING ...
OH OH! I'M FLATTERED !
YOU ARE ANG TSHERING ?
WHAT A JOY FOR AN OLD MAN THAT SOMEONE STILL REMEMBERS HIS NAME!

LIKE I PRESUMED THAT IT WAS STOLEN GOODS, I TOOK HIS KIT FOR A SMALL PRICE.
HE WANTED TO SELL ME A LOT OF THINGS
A MAN I'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE CAME BY THIS MORNING
I'M JUST RECALLING !
BUT YES !
INCLUDING THE CAMERA THAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR
...
IN THAT KIT, THERE'S WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR
I BELIEVE THAT
IS EVERY-THING THERE ?
FLAP
HE HE HE
THERE.
IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR ?

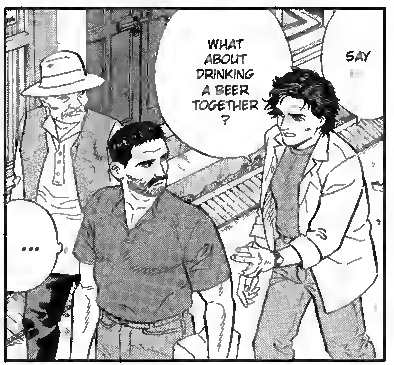
EXPORTS
FAX
TD DD

THE PLANET EXPORTS
tuUut
tuUut
tuUut
tuUut


WHERE DID I SEE HIM BEFORE ?
ARRANGEMENTS


WHO THIS MAN CAN BE ?
"THE POISONOUS SNAKE"

I'D LIKE TO TALK WITH YOU


SAY
WHAT ABOUT DRINKING A BEER TOGETHER ?
...

TALK ?

YOU KNOW WHAT IT REPRESENTS, RIGHT?
YES. I'D LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THIS CAMERA
...
IT'S THE CAMERA THAT GEORGE MALLORY HAD WITH HIM DURING HIS ASCENT OF MT EVEREST IN 1924
WELL, NO
THAT'S NOT EXACTLY RIGHT
...
IT'S RATHER ...
THAT IT'S THE SAME MODEL AS MALLORY'S.
WELL, YOU'RE MISTAKEN
LISTEN TO ME! IT'S INDEED MALLORY'S CAMERA
IT'S NOT IN KATMANDU THAT YOU'VE BEEN ABLE TO FIND IT!
SUMER
YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS, I'M SURE.

MAYBE YOU MIGHT'VE FOUND IT YOURSELF ?
...
HOW DID YOU GET IT ?
TELL ME
THE FILM ?
YOU SHOULD KNOW WHERE THE FILM WHICH WAS INSIDE IS
IF IT'S YOU WHO DISCOVERED IT, THEN
...!
IF THAT WAS THE CASE ?
IT'S INDEED MALLORY'S CAMERA, RIGHT?
TELL ME! WHERE DID YOU FIND IT?
I DON'T KNOW...
...
TO DEVELOP THIS FILM COULD REWRITE THE WHOLE HIMALAYA'S HISTORY!
YEAH!

IT'S A WONDERFUL DISCOVERY !
WAIT, YOU DON'T REALIZE
AND I DON'T HAVE ANY INTEREST IN THIS STUFF
I'M TELLING YOU THAT I DON'T KNOW
WHAT ?
...
FORGET WHAT HAPPENED TODAY, FORGET THIS CAMERA, AND STOP ASKING ME!
LISTEN TO ME CAREFULLY, I REPEAT THE SAME THING AS MANI KUMAR
...
ZAAP
THAT'S ALL!
DON'T TRY TO UNDERSTAND FORGET
WHY ?

WHEN FUKAMICHI NOTICED IT ...
THIS LIMP ...
WHILE HE WAS GOING AWAY, THE MAN WAS DRAGGING HIS LEG WHILE WALKING.
ZAAAP

THE MEMORY RETURNED TO HIM IMMEDIATELY

ARE YOU REALLY HABU-JOUJI ?!

WAIT !!

HABU-SAN! IS IT YOU ?!

BUT...
HE DID NOT TURN BACK.
ZAAAP
DURING THAT MOMENT, HE BELIEVED THAT HE SAW A SHIVER RUN ALONG THE SPINE OF BIKHALU-SANH
फोटो कपी
PHOTO COPY
HABU-JOUJI
WHAT IS HE DOING HERE IN NEPAL ?

Scanned by vensu
Translated by Kabuto
Edited by vensu
Checked by Baha

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Scanned by vensu
Translated by Sherry
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Checked by Baha

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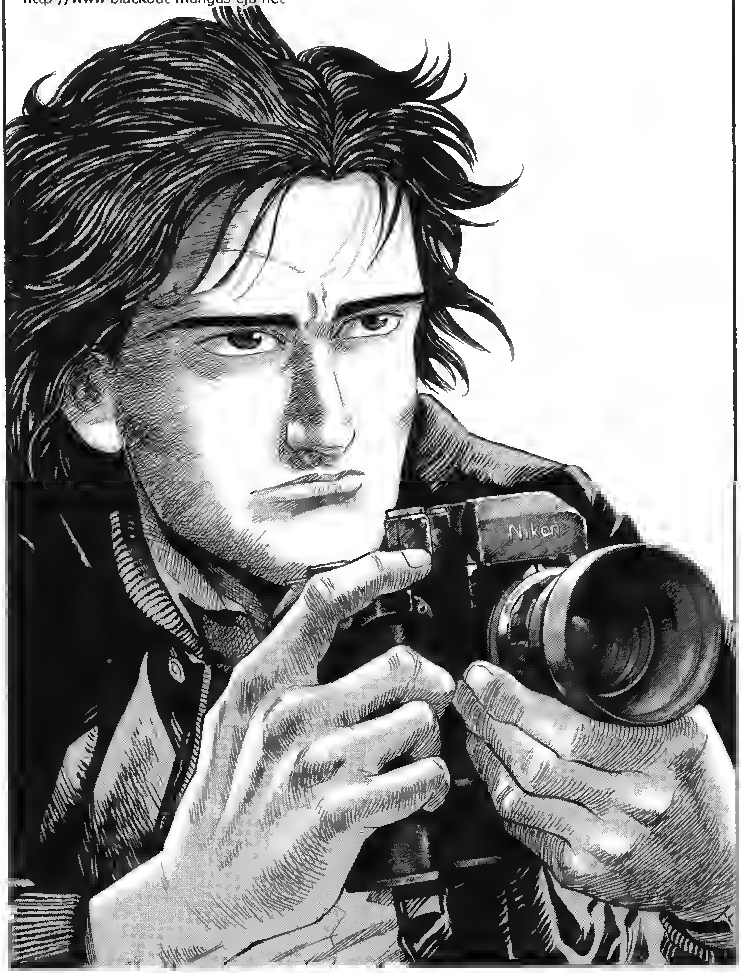
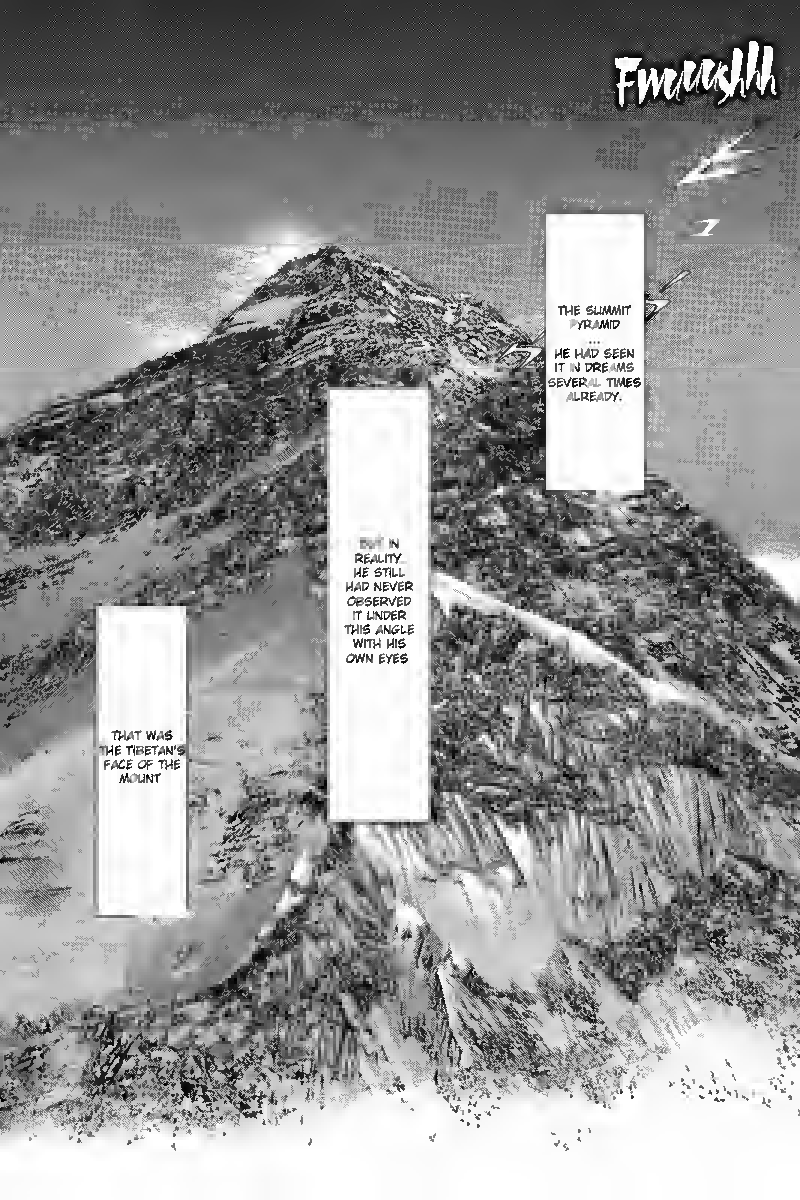
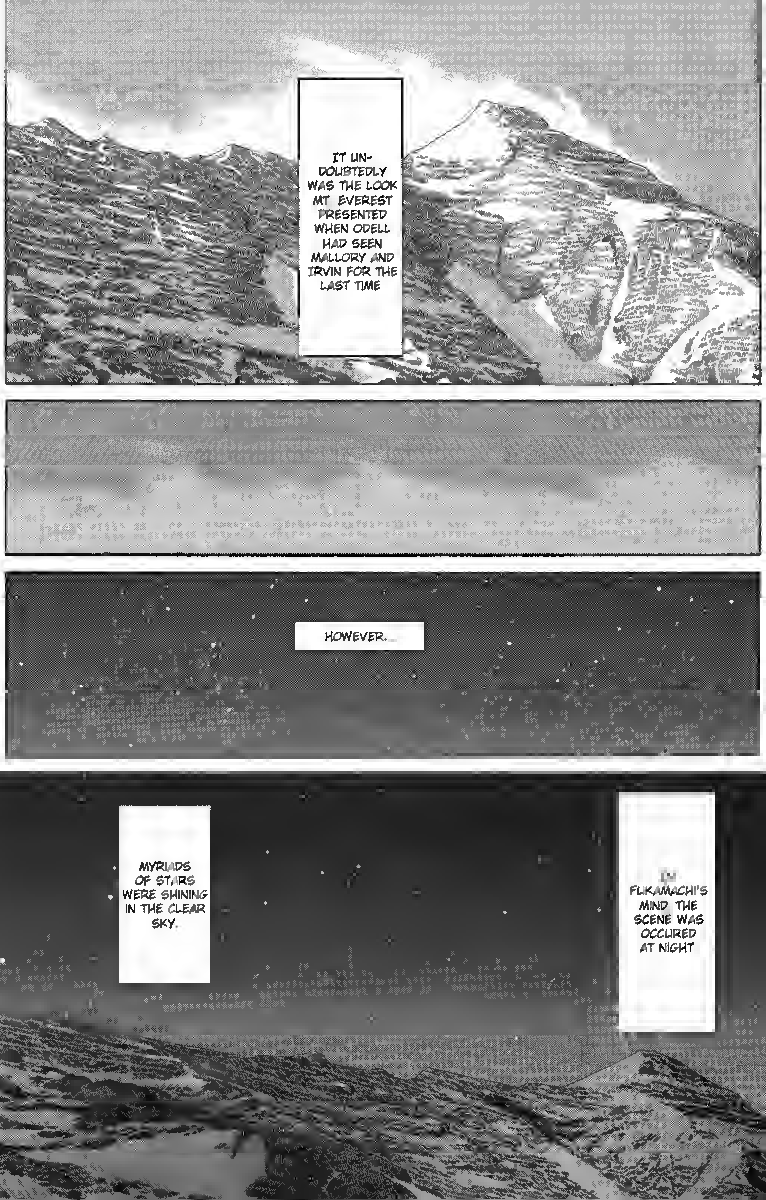
Chapter 03 : The hungry wolf

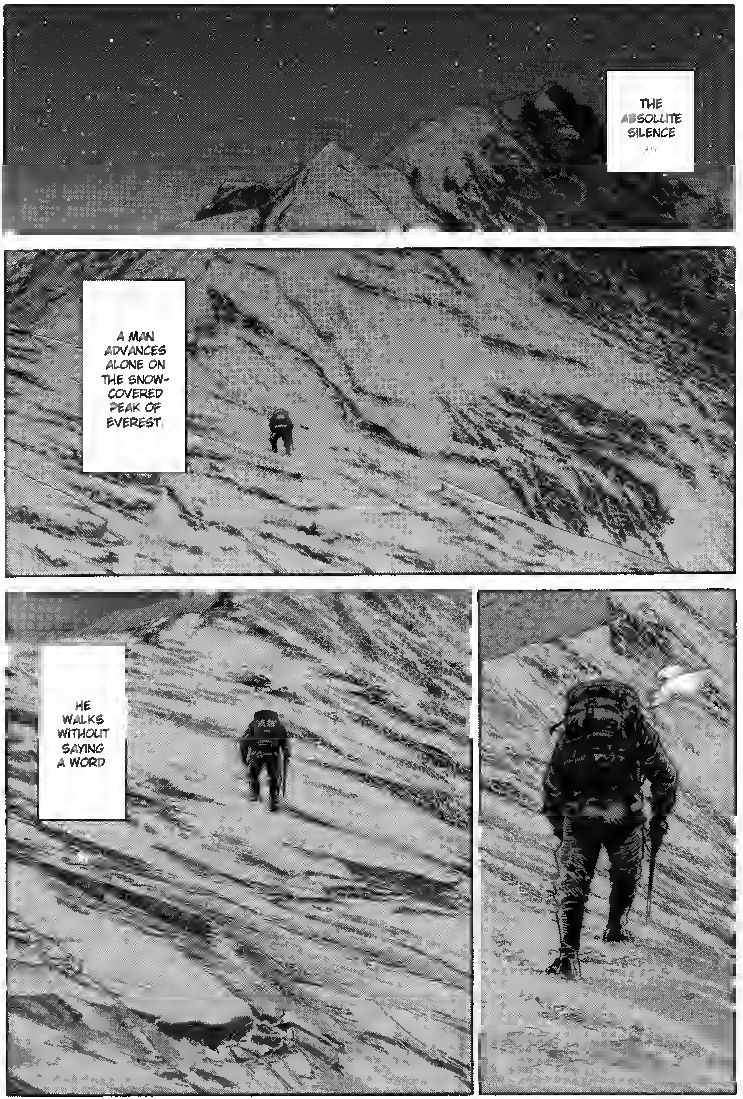


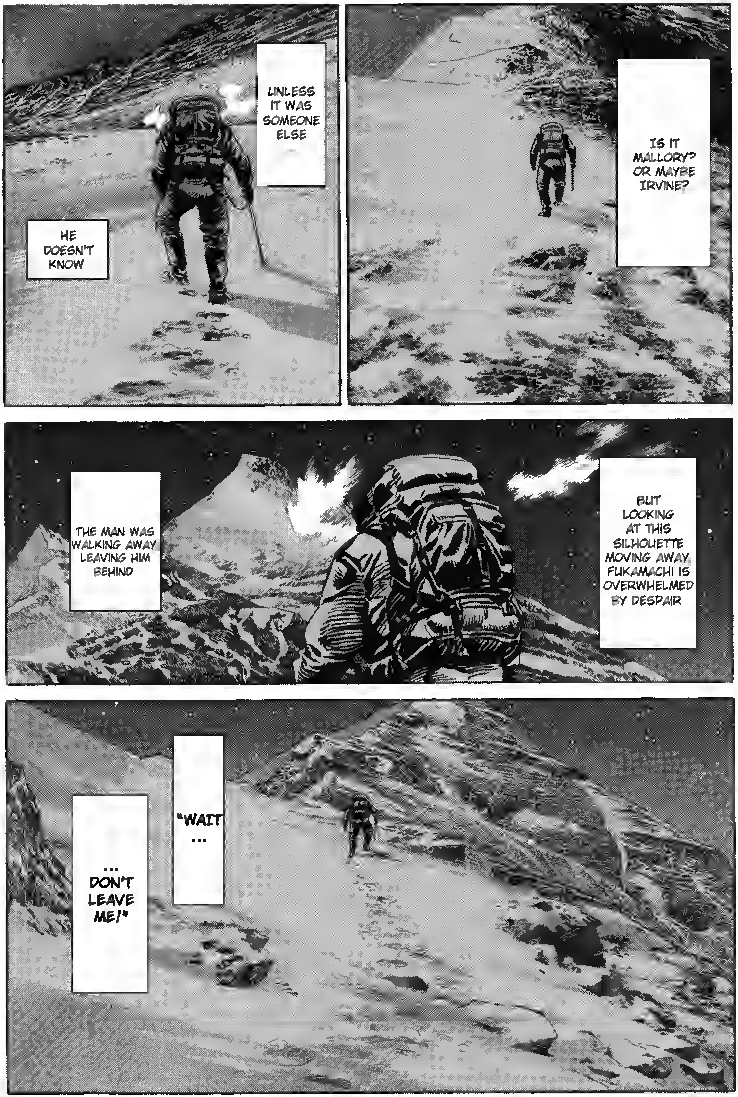
TOKYO
ーtuuuuuー

THE EPIC OF MOUNT EVEREST
BY
SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND
THE Mystery of Mallory and
ONE WEEK HAD PASSED BY SINCE HIS RETURN FROM NEPAL
FUKAMACHI HASN'T LEFT HIS HOTEL ROOM THESE PAST THREE DAYS, DEVOTING ALL HIS TIME TO READING THE BOOKS ABOUT MT. EVEREST AND MALLORY.
AT THIS MOMENT, HE IS REMINDED VERY CLEARLY ABOUT THE SNOW-COVERED ROCK MASS ON TOP OF EVEREST.


Fwoosh
1
THE SUMMIT PYRAMID ... HE HAD SEEN IT IN DREAMS SEVERAL TIMES ALREADY.
BUT IN REALITY HE STILL HAD NEVER OBSERVED IT UNDER THIS ANGLE WITH HIS OWN EYES
THAT WAS THE TIBETAN'S FACE OF THE MOUNT


IT UNDOUBTEDLY WAS THE LOOK MT. EVEREST PRESENTED WHEN ODELL HAD SEEN MALLORY AND IRVIN FOR THE LAST TIME
HOWEVER...
MYRIADS OF STARS WERE SHINING IN THE CLEAR SKY.
IN FUKAMACHI'S MIND THE SCENE WAS OCCURED AT NIGHT


THE ABSOLUTE SILENCE
A MAN ADVANCES ALONE ON THE SNOW-COVERED PEAK OF EVEREST
HE WALKS WITHOUT SAYING A WORD


HE DOESN'T KNOW
UNLESS IT WAS SOMEONE ELSE
IS IT MALLORY? OR MAYBE IRVINE?
THE MAN WAS WALKING AWAY, LEAVING HIM BEHIND
BUT LOOKING AT THIS SILHOUETTE MOVING AWAY, FUKAMACHI IS OVERWHELMED BY DESPAIR
"WAIT ...
... DON'T LEAVE ME!"

IT SEEMED TO FUKAMACHI THAT IT WASN'T TOWARD THE TOP THAT THE MAN WAS HEADING
BUT TOWARD THE STARRY SKY.

DID THE TRAVELLER FINISH BY REACHING THE SUMMIT ?
Fwaaaahh
HE DIDN'T KNOW BECAUSE HE WOULD ALWAYS WAKE UP BEFORE THE END OF THE DREAM

AFTER OPENING HIS EYES, FUKAMACHI REMAINED IN HIS BED FOR A WHILE, WONDERING WHY HE HAPPENED TO HAVE THIS DREAM.
IT MIGHT BE BECAUSE MALLORY DIDN'T LEAVE HIS THOUGHTS FOR A SINGLE MOMENT.
"BECAUSE IT'S HERE ..."
THAT'S WHAT MALLORY ANSWERED TO A JOURNALIST WHO ASKED HIM WHY HE WANTED TO CLIMB THE EVEREST.

TULULULU
I'M IN YOUR HOTEL'S TEA ROOM
CAN YOU MEET ME THERE ?
OK I'M COMING RIGHT NOW
MIYAKAWA HERE
FUKAMACHI ?
OH!
I MET KUDO-SAN BUT...
I STILL DIDN'T SEE THE OTHERS MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITION. I ONLY TALKED TO THEM BY PHONE
YEAH
I SEE
IT HAS ALREADY BEEN A WEEK
THE FIRST THING I DID WHEN I ARRIVED WAS TO PAY A VISIT TO IOKA'S AND FUNAJIMA'S FAMILIES TO DEPOSIT AN INCENSE STICK ON THEIR ALTARS

FOLLOWING THE FAILURE OF THE EXPEDITION
THE PUBLICATION OF THE ALBUM-PHOTO THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE RELEASED BY GAKUYUSHA EDITION, WAS CANCELED
IT'S TOO BAD THAT THIS ALBUM WON'T BE ABLE TO BE PUBLISHED
IT'S REALLY A WASTE, SUCH BEAUTIFUL PHOTOS
MY PLEASURE
IT WOULD BE A SHAME TO NOT USE THEM. I WOULD LIKE TO USE SOME OF THEM FOR A MAGAZINE. IF IT'S OK WITH YOU.
YES?
ABOUT HABU JOJI
fwoosh
BY THE WAY
I QUESTIONED ALL THE PEOPLE WHO WERE LIKELY TO KNOW THE ACTUAL WHEREABOUTS OF HABU, BUT I FAILED
NO, PRECISELY
ABSOLUTELY NOTHING.
HOW COME ?
DID YOU FIND SOMETHING?

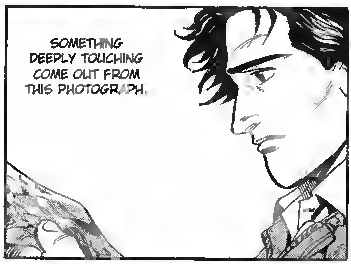
IT'S NOT SURPRISING THAT ALMOST NOBODY STILL CARES ABOUT HIM.
REALLY ?
I DON'T KNOW.
BUT HARU HAS ALWAYS BEEN AN ECCENTRIC
THAT AGAIN ?
HOW DID THIS FUNNY IDEA CAME INTO YOUR MIND?
ARE YOU SERIOUS ?
I WONDER FOR WHICH REASON YOU INQUIRE ABOUT HIM
FURTHER-MORE...
WELL, IT'S SIMPLY THAT...
I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHY HE SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED
YES.
REALLY SERIOUS
THEN DON'T GIVE UP YET.
AFTER ALL, THE RESEARCH I'VE MADE IS NOT VERY DEEP.
...

...
THE FIRST ONE IS THE DATE OF HIS ACCIDENT IN THE BIG JORASSES
THE SECOND WAS TAKEN WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITION WHICH TRIED TO CLIMB MT. EVEREST
HERE
THOSE ARE THE PHOTOS I TALKED TO YOU ABOUT
HE WILL CERTAINLY BE ABLE TO HELP YOU
YOU SHOULD ASK KUDO TO PUT YOU IN CONTACT WITH PEOPLE WHO KNEW HABU
IT'S PERFECT THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
THERE ARE THE ONLY COPIES OF THE PHOTOS THAT APPEARED IN OUR MAGAZINE IS THAT OK?
THAT'S TRUE I'LL ASK HIM
YES

IN THE FIRST PHOTO, HABU WAS MORE OR LESS THIRTY YEARS OLD.
THE SEVERE GLANCE WITH WHICH HE LAID DOWN THE OBJECTIVE OF THE CAMERA HAD SOMETHING OF THE GLEAM WHICH SHONE IN THE EYES OF THE MAN THAT I MET IN KATMANDOU.
IN THE SECOND PHOTO, HIS FACE WAS THE ONE OF A MAN IN HIS FORTIES
THE HARDNESS OF HIS GLANCE HAD BEEN ACCENTUATED

THE FRUSTATION AND INDIGNATION COULD BE READ IN HIS EYES.
AS IF IT WERE TOO INTENSE TO BE CONTAINED, HIS FEELINGS, ITS FEELINGS PIERCED THROUGH ITS GLANCE
AT LEAST THAT'S HOW IT SEEMED TO FUKAMACHI
I WAS TOLD THAT THIS HABU WAS REALLY UNPLEASANT
HIS FACE IS DEFINITELY THE ONE OF A 40 YEAR OLD MAN, BUT
SOMETHING IN HIS EXPRESSION MAKES YOU THINK OF A 14 OR 15 YEAR OLD ADOLESCENT
IT MUST BE BECAUSE OF HIS PERSONALITY THAT
MOST OF HIS COMRADES STAYED AWAY FROM HIM.

"I DON'T TRUST ANYONE" THE BOY IN THE MAN SEEMED TO SAY.
"LIKEWISE, I DON'T ASK ANYONE TO TRUST ME EITHER..."
A SOLITARY MAN.
IT IS A TEENAGER FIRMLY DETERMINED TO LIVE IN LONELINESS THAT COULD BE SEEN IN THIS MAN

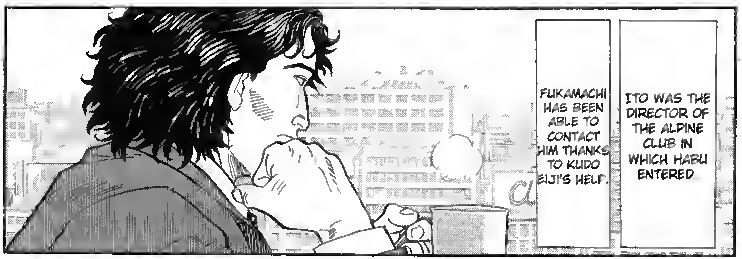

SOMETHING DEEPLY TOUCHING COME OUT FROM THIS PHOTOGRAPH.

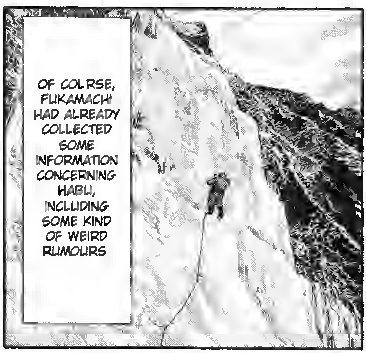
THERE WAS SOMETHING IN THIS INDEFINABLE EXPRESSION OF HIS THAT WAS REALLY ATTRACTIVE.

NO DOUBT !
DOM DOM

THE JAPANESE ENCOUNTERED IN KATMANDOU
AND THIS MAN ON THE PHOTO
ARE DEFINITELY THE SAME PERSON.
DOM
DOM
SO IT REALLY WAS HABU JOJI AFTER ALL!

FUKAMACHI WAS WAITING FOR ITO KOICHIRO.


FUKAMACHI HAS BEEN ABLE TO CONTACT HIM THANKS TO KUDO EIJI'S HELP.
ITO WAS THE DIRECTOR OF THE ALPINE CLUB IN WHICH HABU ENTERED


OF COURSE, FUKAMACHI HAD ALREADY COLLECTED SOME INFORMATION CONCERNING HABU, INCLUDING SOME KIND OF WEIRD RUMOURS

HABU JOJI
HE MUST BE 49 YEARS OLD NOW.

DURING SOME TIME HE WAS WELL KNOWN AND TREATED LIKE A "CLIMBING GENIUS".
BUT AMONG THE JAPANESE SPECIALISTS OF THE MOUNTAIN, HE IS FAMOUS AS "THE STUBBORN MAN OF ICHINIKURA"
WHAT IS SURPRISING, IS THAT HABU SUDDENLY DISPPEARED FROM THE MIDPOINT OF THE ALPINISM AFTERTHE HIMALAYAN MOVEMENT IN 1985.
THE RUMOUR CLAIMS THAT WHAT HE DID ON MT. EVEREST AT THIS TIME WAS WORTH OF A DEFINITIVE EXCLUSION.
AND HOW ON EARTH DID HE GAIN POSSESSION OF THIS CAMERA?
WHAT IS HE DOING IN NEPAL ?

EXCUSE ME
YOU ARE FUKAMACHI-SAN, ARENT YOU?
I AM ITO KOCHIRO
EXCUSE ME FOR HAVING MADE YOU WAIT
AH NO, NO
I'M THE ONE WHO MUST APOLOGIZE FOR MAKING YOU COME HERE
SO YOU WANT ME TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT HARU, RIGHT?
THAT'S RIGHT
B1F
B2
IT DOESN'T BOTHER YOU
IF I SMOKE ?
PLEASE DO
HARU
HE ALWAYS CHOSE THE MOST DIFFICULT PATHS

DO YOU KNOW WHERE HE IS ?
AND NOW ...
...
IT WAS REALLY SOMETHING TO SEE THIS GUY CLIMB!
HE CLIMBED THEM INCREDIBLY FAST, AS IF HIS LIFE WAS DEPENDING ON IT
...
SINCE THOSE EVENTS IN MT. EVEREST, IN 1985 NOTHING ...
I GUESS THAT YOU MUST KNOW ABOUT IT
I HAVE NO IDEA
ABOUT THAT ...
IT HAS BEEN 8 YEARS ...
BEFORE THAT, HE WOULD CALL ME OR SEND ME A POSTCARD FROM TIME TO TIME, SO I KNEW MORE OR LESS WHAT HE WAS DOING AT THE TIME.
BUT NOW, I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF HE'S STILL ALIVE

IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, IT WAS IN 1960
HARU WAS 16 YEARS OLD BACK THEN
109
ONE DAY, HE CAME TO MY HOUSE LIKE THAT, WITHOUT ASKING
..
AND ME I THINK I WAS 38
IT WAS REALLY SOMETHING
THIS AIR OF DEFIANCE HE HAD
REALLY ?
IT WAS TO ASK ME IF HE COULD JOIN OUR CLUB

HE WAS VERY RED AND FIXED ON ME LIKE HE WANTED TO INTIMIDATE ME.
EVEN THE TONE OF HIS VOICE WAS AGGRESSIVE.
I WANT TO BE PART OF YOUR CLUB!
TELL ME FIRST
HOW DID YOU LEARN ABOUT ITS EXISTENCE
I SAW YOU !
...
AT THE SHINJUKU STATION!
I SAW YOU AND THE OTHERS MEMBERS OF THE CLUB!
WHAT DID YOU SEE?
HOW COME ?

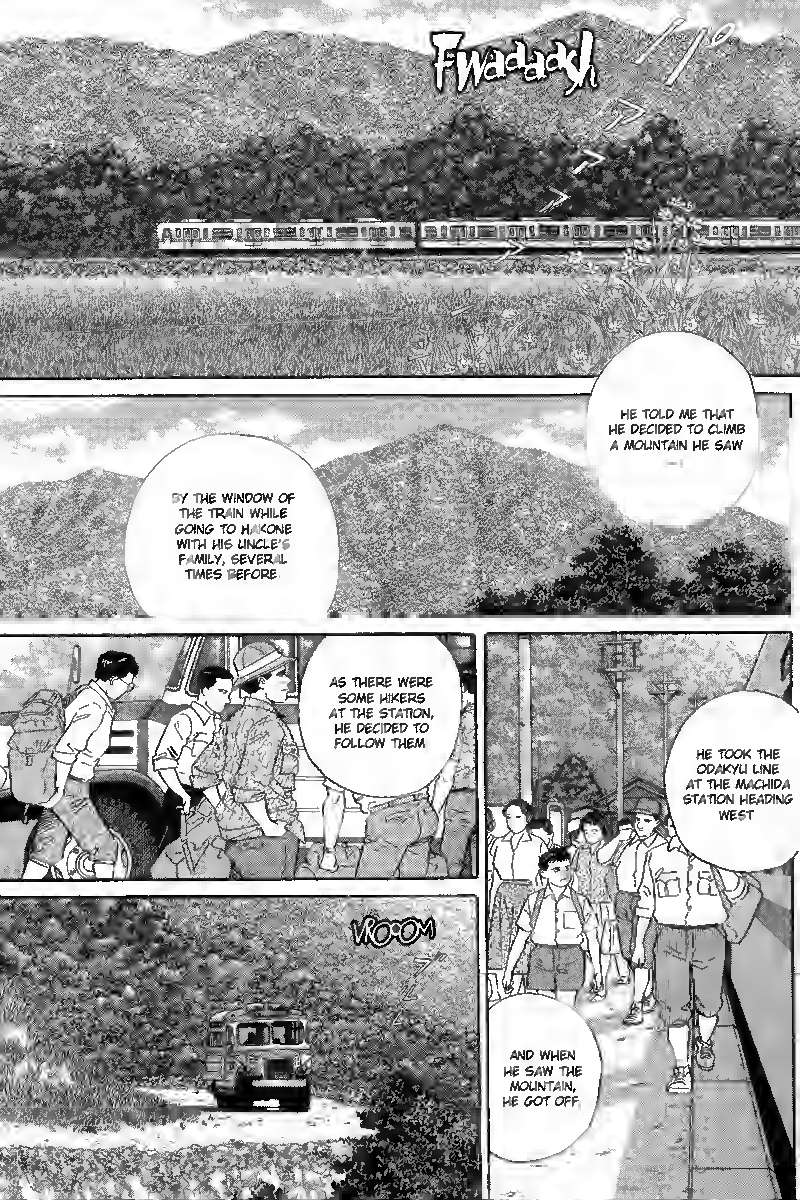
STAP
STAP
STAP
STAP

SHUUP
THERE WAS YOUR ADDRESS, HERE, IN MACHIDA.
I MEMORIZED IT, SO... THAT'S WHY I CAME ...
YOU ALL HAD LARGE BLACK BAGS WITH THE LOGO "ALPINE CLUB SEIFU".
...
PFUUUU
OK. AND WHY DO YOU WANT TO JOIN OUR CLUB?
BECAUSE I CAN'T BEAR TO BE MADE FUN OF ANY-MORE.
EVERY-ONE?
BUT WHY ?
BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE PARENTS.
AND ALSO ... BECAUSE I HAVE A BAD LEG.
REALLY? THERE'RE SOME PEOPLE OUT THERE MAKING FUN OF YOU ?
YES EVERY-ONE
EVERYONE LOOKS AT ME AS IF I WAS SOME KIND OF MORON.

HARU LOST HIS PARENTS
WHEN HE WAS 6 YEARS OLD
THEY DIED IN A BUS ACCIDENT WHEN THEY RETURNED FROM FAMILY TRIP
SIGH
HE WAS THE ONLY SURVIVOR. HE'S BEEN ADOPTED BY HIS UNCLE IN CHIBA
...
HIS LITTLE SISTER DIED TOO IN THIS ACCIDENT.
THE ACCIDENT LEFT HIM REPER-CUSSIONS.
THAT'S WHY HE TRAILS HIS LEG SLIGHTLY WHEN HE WALKS
...

WHY?
I DON'T UNDER-STAND
PEOPLE WON'T MAKE FUN OF YOU ANYMORE IF YOU JOIN OUR CLUB ?
AT SHINJUKU, EVERYONE PARTED TO LET YOU PASS.
BECAUSE YOU'RE DOING SOMETHING THE OTHERS CAN'T DO.
NO.
HMM!
IT'S STILL BETTER THAN BEING TREATED LIKE A MORON.
POK
AH AH AH
THAT'S BECAUSE WE FRIGHTEN THEM WITH OUR FILTHY AND DIRTY APPEARANCE!
HAVE YOU MADE EXPEDITIONS BEFORE?
A LITTLE ...
I DON'T REALLY KNOW ...
TELL ME ...
DO YOU LIKE THE MOUNTAIN ?
...

YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU WENT? ARE YOU MAKING FUN OF ME?
IT'S THE TRUTH.
I DON'T KNOW
WHAT MOUNTAIN DID YOU CLIMB ?
tok
OH YEAH ?
TELL ME ABOUT IT.
...
IT WAS NEAR TANZAWA, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT
I THINK THAT
I DON'T KNOW ITS NAME
I WAS REALLY CURIOUS TO HEAR WHAT HE WAS GOING TO TELL ME NEXT
IT WAS IN JULY, AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SUMMER'S HOLIDAYS
AT THE AGE OF 11, HE WENT TO MAKE AN EXPEDITION ON HIS OWN
IN THE END, I LEARNT THAT


Fwaaaash
1/10
HE TOLD ME THAT HE DECIDED TO CLIMB A MOUNTAIN HE SAW
BY THE WINDOW OF THE TRAIN WHILE GOING TO HAKONE WITH HIS UNCLE'S FAMILY, SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE
AS THERE WERE SOME HIKERS AT THE STATION, HE DECIDED TO FOLLOW THEM
HE TOOK THE ODAKYU LINE AT THE MACHIDA STATION HEADING WEST
VROOM
AND WHEN HE SAW THE MOUNTAIN, HE GOT OFF

THE BUS HAD DROPPED OFF ITS PASSENGERS AT THE FOOT OF THE MOUNTAIN
THE PEOPLE STARTED THEIR WALK THEN.

THE HIKERS WERE WALKING FASTER THAN HABU
HE WAS QUICKY LEFT BEHIND.

HE THEN FOUND HIMSELF ALONE ON AN UNKNOWN TRAIL
OF COURSE, HE DIDN'T HAVE A MAP
IN FACT, HE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HE WAS IN THE SOLID MASS OF TANKAWA, THE LARGEST MOUNTAINOUS CHAIN OF THE FIELD IN KANAGAWA.

HAA
HAA
HAA
BUT EVEN THOUGH HE WALKED AND WALKED AGAIN WITHOUT STOPPING HE STILL COULDN'T REACH THE TOP
THERE WAS A PATH, BUT AT THE TIME THE TRAIL WAS NOT AS WELL WORN AND CLEAR AS THEY ARE TODAY.
BUT HE DIDN'T CARE. HE THOUGHT THAT HE WOULD EVENTUALLY END UP ARRIVING AT THE TOP IF HE CONTINUED.
HAA
HAA
HE DIDN'T KNOW HOW LONG IT'D TAKE...
TO REACH THE TOP.
BUT HE FINALLY DECIDED TO CONTINUE CLIMBING UNTIL THE VERY END
HE HESITATED A MOMENT AS TO TURN BACK AND GO BACK HOME.
AFTER EATING THE BREAD HE BROUGHT WITH HIM FOR LUNCH
CRUNCH
CRUNCH

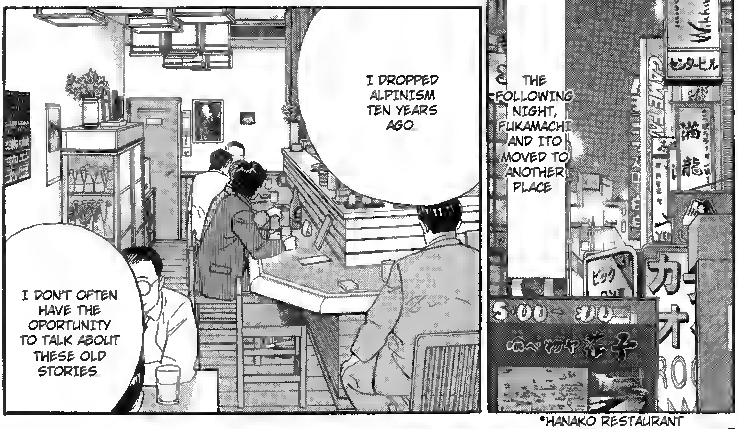
HA!...
HA!...
HA!...
HE DIDN'T MEET ANY-BODY ON HIS ROAD.
THE SUN SAT.
OF COURSE HE HAD NO MATERIAL, SO HE SAT CLINGING TO THE ROCKS
GLG.
GLG
GLG.
AND THEN THE SUN DAWNED
TO DECEIVE HIS HUNGER, HE SPENT THE NIGHT SUCKING ON CANDYS AND DRING THE WATER FROM HIS GOURD.
WET BY THE MORNING DEW, HE COULDN'T CLOSE HIS EYES

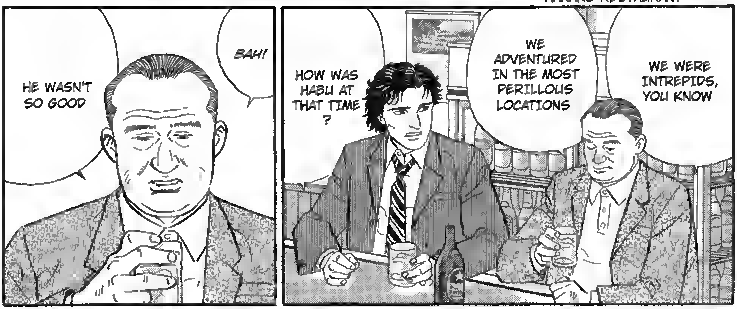
HE ROSE HIS HEAD AND NOTICED THAT HE WAS JUST UNDER THE CREST.
HE COULD SEE THE SHELTER
HEY ?
DID YOU WALK ALL THE WAY HERE ?
WHERE DID YOU SPEND THE NIGHT?
DOWN HERE, UNDER THE STARS ....
ARE YOU ALONE ?
YES
OH! YOU'RE GOOD !
YOU'VE BEEN VERY COURAGEOUS
I GUESS YOU HAVEN'T BEEN EATING MUCH. ARE YOU HUNGRY ?
YES. I HAVEN'T EATEN
SINCE YESTERDAY'S LUNCH...

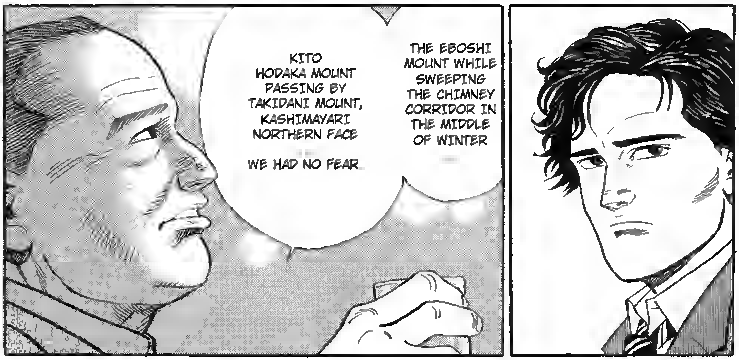
IT WASN'T EASY TO GET UP HERE WALKING ALONE, WHAT A FEAT!
DO YOUR PARENTS KNOW YOU ARE HERE?
THEY MUST BE WORRIED!
CRUNCH CRUNCH
SCRUMP
SCRUMP
HMM!
ARE YOU ENJOYING IT?
AH AH AH!
WHEN HE WAS ELEVEN ONLY ...
...
HABU HAD CLIMBED TONODAKE MOUNT, WITH A HEIGHT OF 1490 METERS, GOING THROUGH THE EDGE OF OKUIRA.
IT IS THE MINIMUM OF A FOUR HOUR LONG WALK FOR AN ADULT.
HE GOT DOWN THE SAME DAY, ALONG WITH THE OTHER HIKERS
AND IN THE EVENING HE WAS BACK HOME.

HE WAS VERY NICE TO HIS NEPHEW BUT HOW SHOULD HAVE NEVER HAVE GONE WITHOUT TELLING HIM.
...
HIS UNCLE, WHO NEVER LAID A HAND ON HIM, BEAT HIM UP THAT SAME NIGHT
HE TOLD ME THAT
I STILL HEAR HIM
TELLING ME THIS STORY WITH HIS FLATE TONE.
WHY DID YOU WANT TO GO TO THE MOUNTAIN ALONE?
...
I WENT THERE ONCE WITH MY PARENTS
THEY DIED ON THE WAY BACK
IT'S BECAUSE I HAD A GOOD MEMORY.

ANYWAY ...
IT WAS NICE.
I DON'T KNOW ...
DID YOU LIKE IT?
AND HOW WAS TANZAWA ?
FINALLY
I DECIDED ON THAT DAY TO WELCOME HIM IN OUR CLUB, WITHOUT CONSULTING IT WITH THE OTHER MEMBERS
THE VIEW OF THE EDGES SPREADING IN THE HORIZON IMPRESSED HIM VERY MUCH.
...


I DROPPED ALPINISM TEN YEARS AGO
I DON'T OFTEN HAVE THE OPORTUNITY TO TALK ABOUT THESE OLD STORIES
THE FOLLOWING NIGHT, FUKAMACHI AND ITO MOVED TO ANOTHER PLACE
*HANAKO RESTAURANT

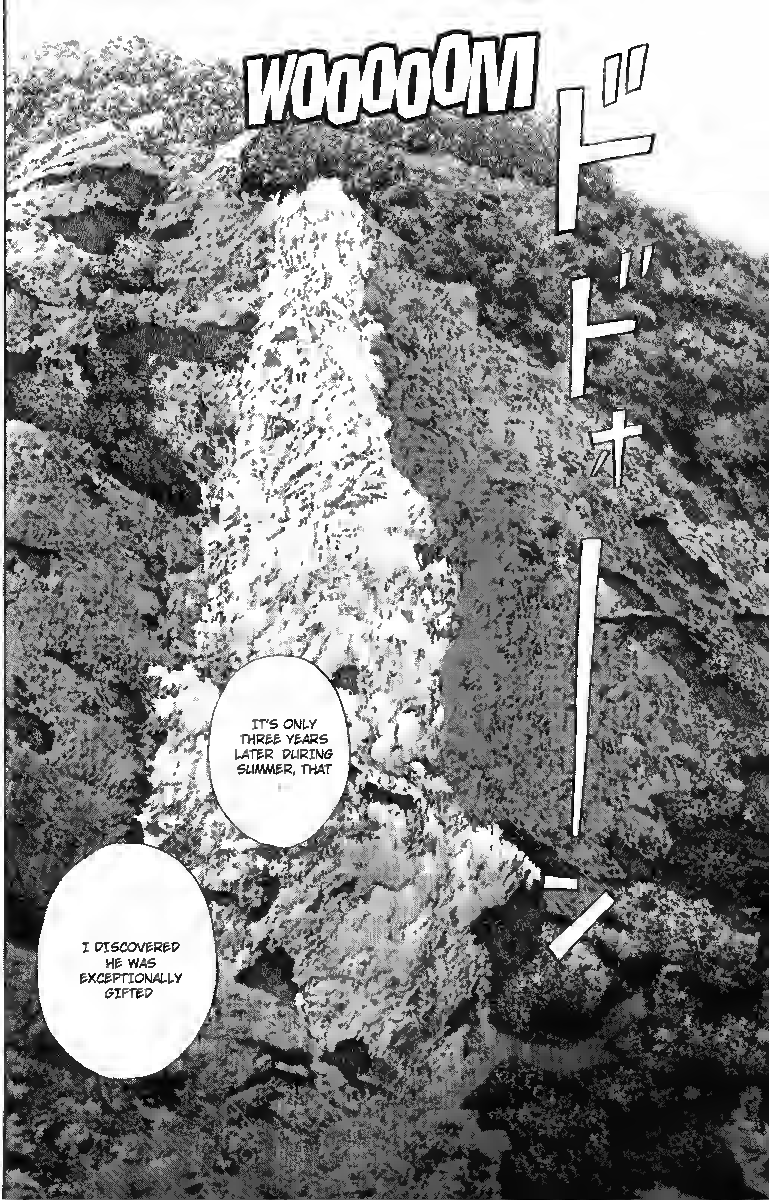

HE WASN'T SO GOOD
BAH!
HOW WAS HABU AT THAT TIME ?
WE ADVENTURED IN THE MOST PERILLOUS LOCATIONS
WE WERE INTREPIDS, YOU KNOW


KITO HODAKA MOUNT PASSING BY TAKIDANI MOUNT, KASHIMAYARI NORTHERN FACE
WE HAD NO FEAR
THE EBOSHI MOUNT WHILE SWEEPING THE CHIMNEY CORRIDOR IN THE MIDDLE OF WINTER

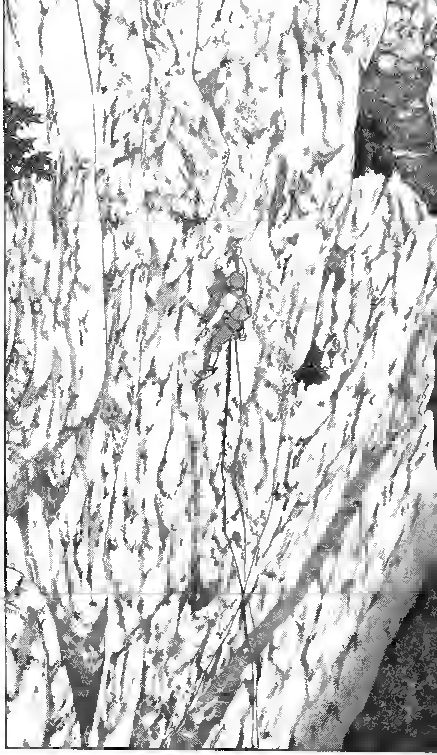
HAA
HAA
BLOM
HAA
HEY! HABU!
CAN YOU GET DOWN THE VALLEY AND FILL IT WITH WATER?
RIGHT NOW
HAA
HAA
HAA

STAND UP!
DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE ALREADY DONE FOR!
HURRY!
YES...
NO!
IT'S ALRIGHT, I'M GOING.
COME ON! DON'T TELL ME YOU CAN'T STAND ON YOUR LEGS!
HAA...
HAA...
TASHIO, TAKE IT, GO IN HIS STEAD.
AT THAT TIME...
HE HAD NO ENDURANCE, EVEN FOR A BEGINNER
HE FILLED THE GOURDS, COOKED THE MEALS WELL, HE DIDN'T ALLOW HIMSELF A MINUTE TO REST
CONSEQUENTLY, HE ALWAYS WAS THE FIRST ONE BE TIRED OR SLOWING DOWN.
IT'S SURPRISING ISN'T IT?
OH YES!
REALLY? IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE.
WHEREVER WE WENT, HE ALWAYS BORE THE HEAVIER BAGS AND WORKED CONSTANTLY HARDER THAN ANYONE.
ON THE OTHER HAND...

IN A WORD, HE DIDN'T ATTRACT SYMPATHY.
GLOUP
THAT WAS HIS PROBLEM.
WHY'S THAT ?
A GUY WHO TRIES THAT HARD SHOULD BE APPRECIATED BY HIS ELDERS, BUT THAT WASN'T THE CASE FOR HABU.
NORMALLY ...
HAA ...
HAA ...
BUT HE ANSWERED THAT HE WAS FINE AND CONTINUED WALKING IT'S TRUE WE NEVER HEARD HIM COMPLAIN, BUT...
WHEN WE SAW HIM BREATHLESS, WE ASKED HIM TO STOP AND REST.
IF YOU GAVE AN EASY TASK TO RELIEVE HIM A BIT, HE REFUSED
HAA ...
A BOY NOT PARTICULARLY NIMBLE IN HIS MOVES, WITH A PERSONALITY MADE OF STEEL, RIGHT, BUT ABRUPT AND NOT VERY TALKATIVE ...
THAT'S HOW EVERYONE SAW HIM.
IT WASN'T RARE HE ENDED FALLING FROM EXHAUSTION.
IT WAS OFTEN THE REST OF THE TEAM WHO HAD TO ASSUME HIS SILLINESS.


WOOOOOM
ドドドドー
IT'S ONLY THREE YEARS LATER DURING SUMMER, THAT
I DISCOVERED HE WAS EXCEPTIONALLY GIFTED

I ALREADY WENT WITH HIM ON VARIOUS CLIFFS TO TRAIN HIM.
UNTIL NOW I NEVER LET HIM TAKE THE LEAD, BUT...
OK
YOU'RE GOING FIRST.
GO ON, HABU.
IT WAS A ONE-CREST OF KITAHODAKA MOUNT.
SO I DECIDED TO GIVE HIM THE LEAD AND SEE HOW HE WAS DOING
I THOUGHT HE HAD A GOOD SENSE OF BALANCE, AND IT WASN'T THE FIRST TIME WE WENT OVER THIS WALL



HE IS CRAZY !!

AH ...

WATCHING HIM FROM BELOW, IT WAS HARD TO CONTAIN MYSELF
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH
... TO SHIFT A LITTLE BIT TO FIND AN EASIER WAY, BUT INSTEAD ...
HE CHOSE ON PURPOSE TO CLIMB A VERY DANGEROUS WAY.
HABU!
WHAT'S WITH YOU ?
SORRY ?

I'M ASKING YOU WHY YOU CHOSE THAT CRAZY WAY!
WHAT ?
WHY DID YOU USE THAT WAY ?
BAH ...
YOU'RE COMPLETELY CRAZY!
YOU FOOL !
WHY ?
WELL... BECAUSE IT WAS THE SHORTEST WAY...
DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M SAYING ?
YES ....
...
BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT AFRAID OF THE MOUNTAIN!
YOU HAVE TO LEARN TO FEAR THE ROCK MORE THAN THAT!

HE WAS THEN
ONLY NINETEEN
WHAT HE WAS LOOKING FOR WAS THE FASTEST WAY TO REACH THE TOP
THAT'S ALL WHAT INTERESTED HIM YOU SEE
...
HE WASN'T WONDERING WHAT WAS THE SAFEST WAY
IN FRONT OF A CLIFF
IT MUST BE FROM THAT PERIOD
GLOWB
OH IT IS
I THINK SO AS WELL
IT'S AN INNATE GIFT, DON'T YOU THINK SO ?
CLIMBING

THAT HABLI'S EXCEPTIONAL TALENTS FOR THE CLIFF
STARTED TO RISE
GWAP
HE ONLY NEEDED 2 YEARS
HE WAS TWENTY ONE
HE TOOK THE LEAD OF THE CORD MORE OFTEN WHEN GOING UP THE MOUNTAIN

ALTHOUGH HE LACKED EXPERIENCE
TECHNICALLY HE COULD PERFECTLY BE COMPARED WITH THE BEST OF THE SEFUKAI
AND BE AT THE LEVEL OF THE NIMBLEST MEN OF YOUR CLUB WHICH MEANT HE WAS ONE OF THE BEST OF JAPAN

WHAT SPEED ...
AND WHAT SENSE OF BALANCE!
HE HAS NO DIFFICULTY FINDING HIS SUPPORTS
IT'S INCREDIBLE
HE IS SO SLOW WHEN HE HAS TO WALK WITH A BAG ON HIS BACK, BUT HE BECOMES ANOTHER MAN WHEN HE'S CLUTCHED ON A CLIFF
HARD TO BELIEVE ...
IT'S THE SAME PERSON ...

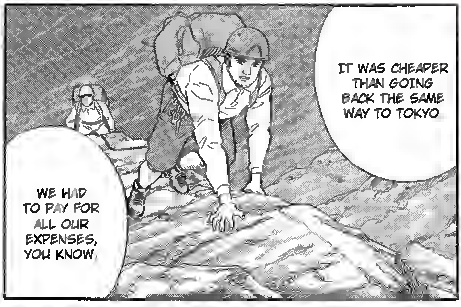
THEIR PROGRESSION IS RYTHMIC AND HARMONIOUS
THOSE WHO OVERCOME IT, ARE AMAZING TO WATCH THEY'RE NOT ONLY FAST THEY'RE ALSO GRACIOUS
IN THE CLIFF'S WORLD
THERE IS A BARRIER MOST PEOPLE CAN'T OVERCOME INSPITE ALL THEIR HARD WORK
WELL
I RECOGNIZE HABU WAS A GIFTED ONE
...
YOU HAD TO SEE HIM CLIMB A WALL
LIKE A BUTTERFLY
HE LOOKED SO LIGHT, LIKE SLIDING ON THE ROCK

GNAP
DURING THE TIME BETWEEN HIS FOURTH AND FIFTH YEAR SINCE HE JOINED THE CLUB
HE TRIED ALL THE CLIFFS HE COULD FIND. IT'S LIKE HE WAS POSSESED.
IN MOUNT TANIGAWA, THE A-PICK OF ICHINOKURA THROAT
AT THAT TIME, HE USED TO SPEND 250 DAYS OF THE YEAR IN THE MOUNTAINS. IT ENTERED THE LEGEND NOWADAYS.
HE CLIMBED CLIFF AFTER CLIFF ALL THE HARDEST ONES IN JAPAN

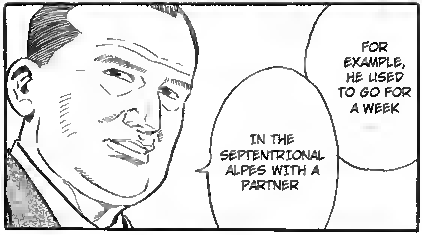
HAA ...
HAA ...
tak
tak
tak
HABU WAS THE CORD'S LEAD ...
ALL THE TIME, WITHOUT SHIFTING.
MOUNT TSUITATEI WA'S FAMOUS VERTICAL CLIFF
IT IS ONE OF THE LONGEST ARTIFICIAL WAYS IN OUR COUNTRY.
Fwuuuuuh
AND THAT'S NOT ALL ,
HE ALSO DID NUMEROUS FROZEN WATERFALLS AND NUMEROUS A-PICKS IN THE MIDDLE OF WINTER

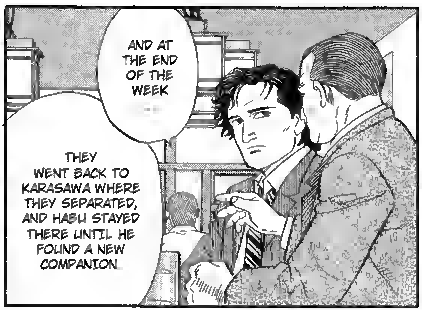
WHEN WE WERE DONE WITH OUR PLANNED COURSE, HE STAYED THERE TO CLIMB MORE CLIFFS.

HE USED TO JOIN EVERY HIKING ORGANISED BY OUR CLUB


IT WAS CHEAPER THAN GOING BACK THE SAME WAY TO TOKYO
WE HAD TO PAY FOR ALL OUR EXPENSES, YOU KNOW.

WHEN NOBODY SHOWED UP, HE STAYED TO WORK LOADING GOODS
AND AT THE FIRST OPORTUNITY, HE WAS DOING A DIFFERENT COURSE


FOR EXAMPLE, HE USED TO GO FOR A WEEK
IN THE SEPTENTRIONAL ALPES WITH A PARTNER

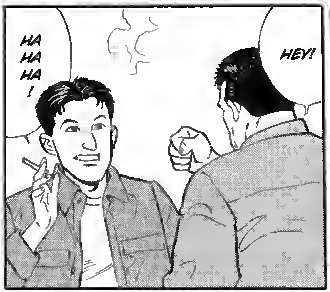

AND AT THE END OF THE WEEK
THEY WENT BACK TO KARASAWA WHERE THEY SEPARATED, AND HABU STAYED THERE UNTIL HE FOUND A NEW COMPANION.

THE MOUNTAIN
THAT'S ALL HE WAS THINKING ABOUT
BESIDES IT, THERE WAS NOTHING IN HIS LIFE.
STAYING THE MAXIUM AMOUNT OF TIME IN THE MOUNTAIN
WAS ALL WHAT INTERESTED HADU.
SO WHAT ?
YOU'RE JOKING. WE HAVEN'T THE TIME TO DO ANOTHER COURSE.
WHAT ?
HEY! LET'S GO!
...
YOU HAVEN'T COME HERE TO SIT ON THE SHELTER'S BENCH!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING!
I PREFER TO STAY HERE QUIETLY DURING HALF A DAY.
WELL, WE WOULD BEFORCED TO COME BACK IN THE MIDDLE OF THE WAY.

I DON'T CARE IF YOU'RE NOT COMING! I'LL GO ALONE!
AND WE'LL DO THE REST ANOTHER DAY!
HABU!
IT DOESN'T MATTER IF WE DON'T HAVE THE TIME! WE CAN STILL CLIMB A LITTLE BIT!
LET'S GO!
BUT I ....
AH, HE NEVER THOUGHT IT OVER
WHEN THERE WAS SOMETHING HE DIDN'T LIKE, HE VOICED IT OUT LOUD
...
THERE WASN'T ENOUGH PEOPLE LEFT TO TEAM UP WITH HIM.
SO FOR THAT REASON
IN THE MOUNTAIN, HE COULDN'T BEAR TO STAY HALF A DAY LAGGING HE HAD TO SCRAPE THE ROCK

AH AH AH AH !
FORGET IT, MAN
MITSUTAKI PASSAGE IS TOO MUCH FOR YOU!
THE CLUB'S MEMBERS WERE GATHERED FOR A DINNER.
THE DISCUSSION WAS VERY LIVELY ...
I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHEN ...
SOMETHING HAPPENED THAT SHOOK EVERYONE
BY THE WAY, KIMURA
WHAT WOULD YOU DO ?
KIRIN
IT'S THE MIDDLE OF WINTER.
YOU'RE THE ONE LEADING YOU HAVE TO BEAR ALL HIS WEIGHT
ALONE, WITHOUT THAT OVERWEIGHT, YOU CAN MAKE IT.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN ?
IMAGINE THAT...
YOUR PARTNER FALLS AND STAYS HANGING ABOVE THE VOID.

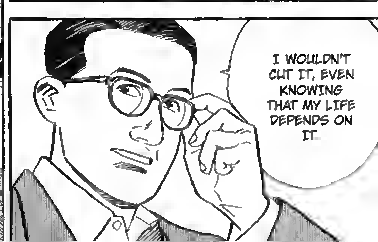
HOWEVER IF YOU CUT THE CORD WHILE YOU STILL HAVE STRENGTH, YOU CAN SURVIVE.
IF THE SITUATION DOESN'T CHANGE, YOU'LL BOTH DIE.
THAT WITH YOUR PARTNER'S WEIGHT YOU CAN'T EVEN MOVE.
THE PROBLEM IS...


HA HA HA !
HEY!

GOOD QUESTION
IF YOU WERE THE ONE HANGING ON THE VOID, I WOULD NOT THINK ABOUT IT TWICE.
SO? WHAT WOULD YOU DO ?

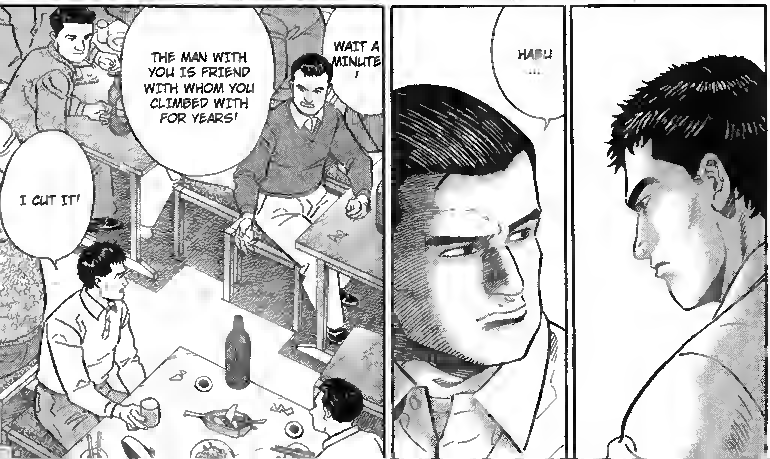
I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO LIVE WITH SUCH REMORSE.
SAME HERE I WOULDN'T
ESPECIALLY IF THE GUY IS YOUR FRIEND
YEAH, IMPOSSIBLE

MOREOVER, THE GUY HANGING IS STILL ALIVE, ISN'T HE?
THAT CORD IS OUR LIFE INSURANCE IT'S NOT THAT EASY TO CUT IT!
DON'T TALK SO LIGHT-LY!

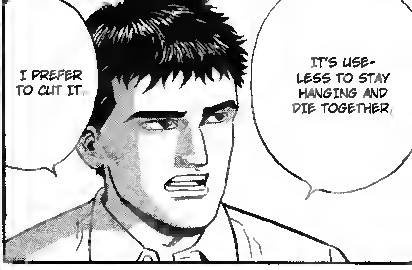

I WOULDN'T CUT IT, EVEN KNOWING THAT MY LIFE DEPENDS ON IT.

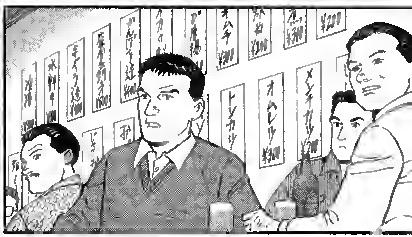
I WOULD CUT IT.

THE DIFFERENT MEALS POSTED ON THE WALL: ANKAKU (CHINESE PASTA), KAMAAGE(FRESH), ITALIAN(PASTA), JAKO CHIRASHI(SMALL FISHES AND RAPESH), WASURO NATTOU(TAKA WITH SOJA), IKA NATTOU(SHELLED WITH SOJA) ETC.


THE MAN WITH YOU IS FRIEND WITH WHOM YOU CLIMBED WITH FOR YEARS!
WAIT A MINUTE!
I CUT IT!
HARU ...

AND IF YOU WERE THE ONE HANGING ON THIS VOID?
WHAT WOULD YOU THINK ?
NOTHING SPECIAL, BECAUSE THERE IS NO OTHER SOLUTION.


I PREFER TO CUT IT.
IT'S USELESS TO STAY HANGING AND DIE TOGETHER.



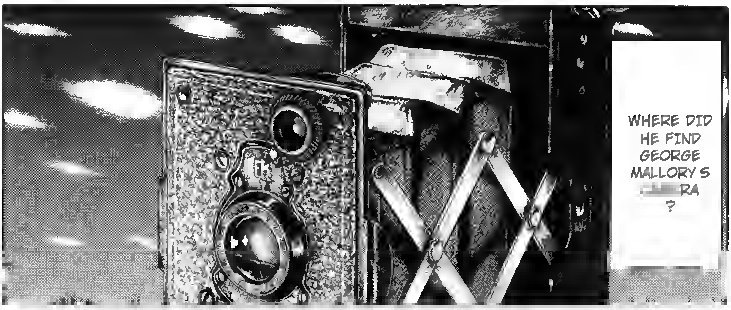
...

I WOULD CUT THE CORD SO IF I'M THE ONE FALLING I WOULDN'T BLAME ANYONE FOR DOING THE SAME

IF IT HAPPENS SOMEDAY
DON'T HESITATE

AT FIRST, IT WAS JUST A JOKE STARTED UNDER THE EFFECTS OF A FEW GLASSES OF ALCOHOL
I IGNORED THIS EPISODE
WOW
WAS SERIOUS WHEN HE SPOKE
BUT HABU, HE...
...
IT WASN'T EASY TO UNDERSTAND WHAT WAS GOING ON IN HIS HEAD
HMM
I THINK HE REALLY BELIEVED WHAT HE WAS SAYING

BIKHALU SANH...
EYES FROM WHERE SPOUTED OUT A GLARE OF JADE AND CHEEKS OBSCURED BY A DENSE BEARD...
WHAT MYSTERY WAS HIDDEN BEHIND THIS STARE?
WHAT WAS HABU DOING AT KATMANDOU?

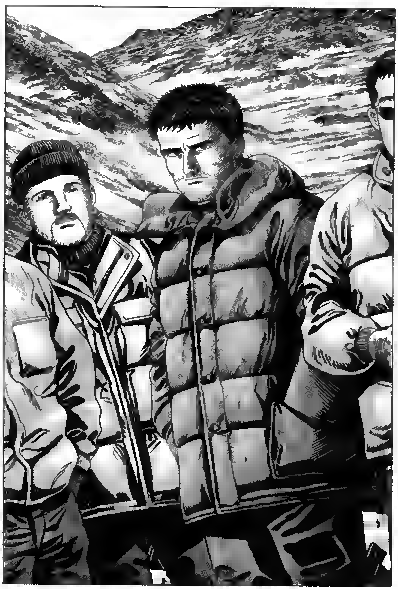

WHERE DID HE FIND GEORGE MALLORY'S [illegible]RA ?

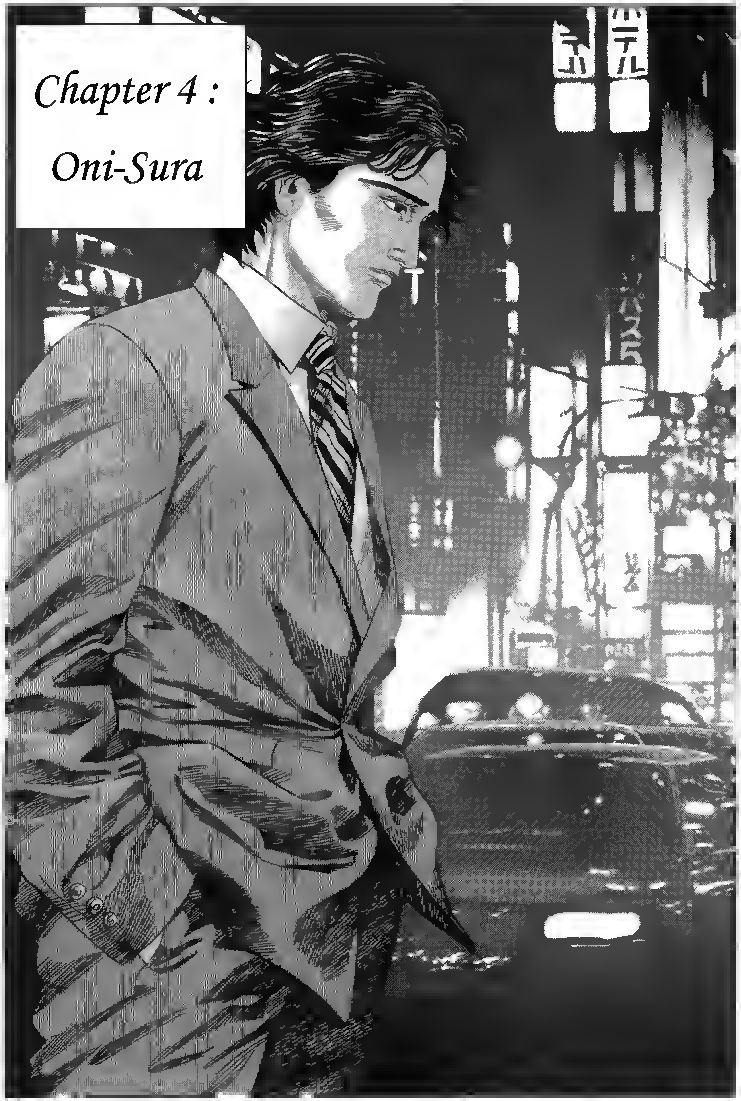
WHILE INVESTIGATING HABU'S PAST, FUKAMACHI HOPED TO FIND ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS OSESSING HIM
MONEY
COTTAGE
ARTS

HABU JOUJI
HE HAD THE PREMONITION THAT HE WOULD SEE THAT MAN AGAIN

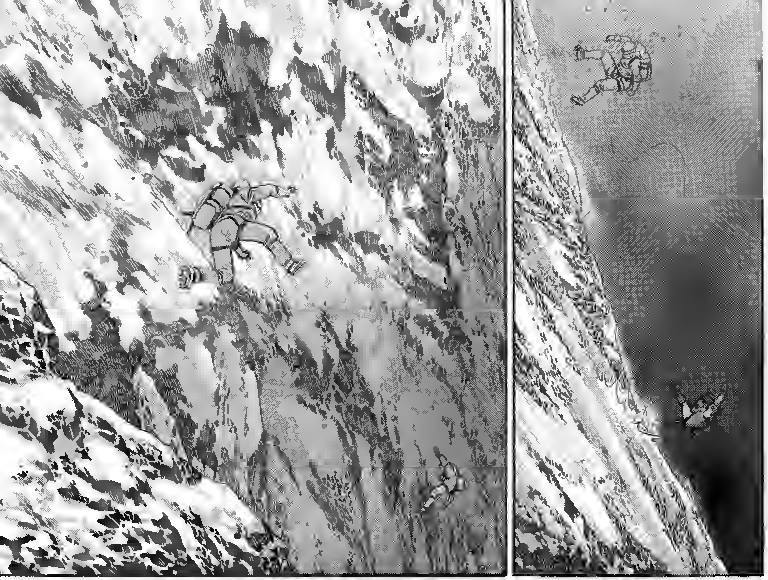
Scanned by vensu
Translated by kal
Edited by vensu
Checked by Baha

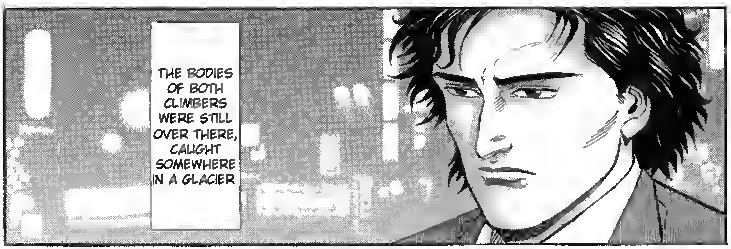
Released by #blackout@irchighway net
http //www blackout-mangas cjb net

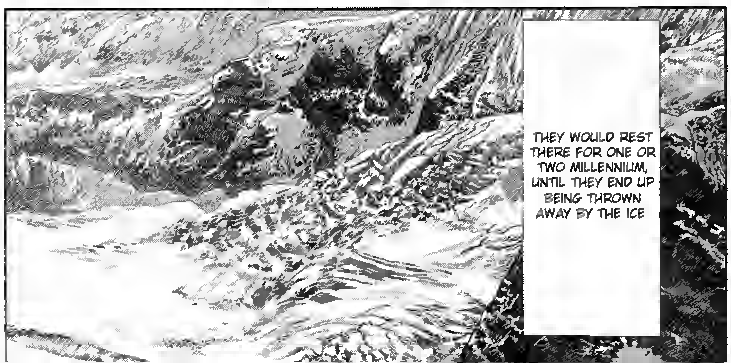



Chapter 4 :
Oni-Sura

FUKAMACHI WAS WONDERING ABOUT HIS OWN BEHAVIOUR
WHY DID HE WANT TO RETURN TO SEE HARU AGAIN?
カラオケ
カラオ
HE SUDDENLY REMEMBERED ANOTHER SCENE, ONE WHICH HAD LEFT A DEEP IMPRESSION ON HIS MIND

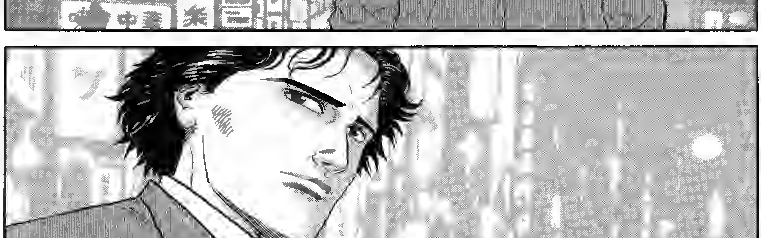



THE BODIES OF BOTH CLIMBERS WERE STILL OVER THERE, CAUGHT SOMEWHERE IN A GLACIER


THEY WOULD REST THERE FOR ONE OR TWO MILLENNIUM, UNTIL THEY END UP BEING THROWN AWAY BY THE ICE

IF HE DECIDED TO ERASE HABU JOUJI AND MALLORY'S CAMERA FROM HIS MEMORY
HE WOULD MOST LIKELY ABANDON THE MOUNTAIN SCENERY FOREVER
HE FELT IT
STAP
IF HE HAD NOT MET HABU
IF HE HAD NOT FIND THIS CAMERA

WITHOUT A DOUBT, HE WOULD HAVE CHOSEN TO CHANGE HIS LIFE LEAVING THE MOUNTAINS FOREVER, ALL THE WHILE KEEPING THE BITTERNESS TO HIMSELF.

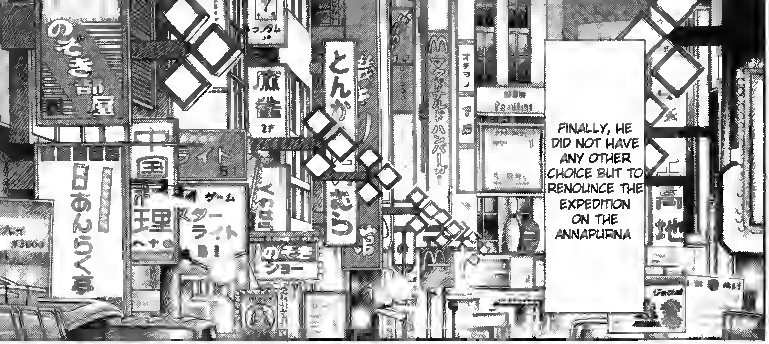


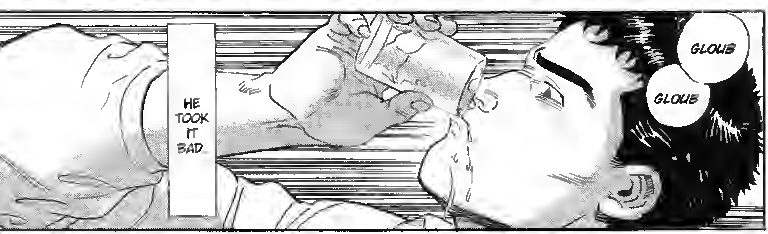
HABU JOUJI AND MALLORY'S CAMERA
...
THEY ARE THE LINKS WHICH STILL JOINED HIM WITH THE MOUNTAIN AT THAT MOMENT.
Fwaaaahh

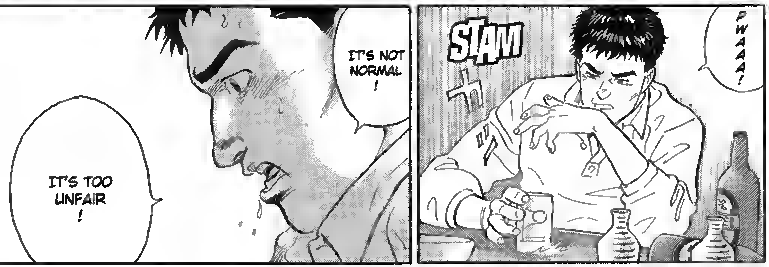
tuuuuutt
tuuuuutt
tuuuuutt
IT WAS IN 1970, AT THE AGE OF 26 YEARS OLD, THAT HABU ACHIEVED AN EXPLOIT WHICH MADE HIM ENTER THE LEGEND AND ALLOWED HIM TO LET HIS NAME IN JAPANESE'S HISTORY OF ALPINISM
EVERYTHING BEGAN WITH AN EXPEDITION TO THE HIMALYANS BY THE SEFUUKAI CLUB
IT WAS SOMETHING HISTORIC THE FIRST EXPEDITION OF THE CLUB OUTSIDE JAPAN
AND FOR EVERYBODY, THE FIRST ATTEMPT IN THE HIMALAYAS
FUKAMICHI HAD TAKEN AN APPOINTMENT WITH INOUE MAKIO, A MEMBER OF THE SEFUUKAI CLUB WHO HAD BEEN MANY TIMES HABU'S CLIMBING PARTNER
YES, INDEED

WE WERE AIMING AT THE ANNAPURNA, 8091 METERS
THE AIM WAS TO REACH THE SUMMIT BY ITS FAMOUS SOUTH SIDE AND ITS UNEVEN 3000 METERS
WE WERE BOTH OUT OF MONEY
BECAUSE HE COULDN'T
FOR WHAT REASON DIDN'T HARU TAKE PART IN THIS EXPEDITION ?
BUT
THERE WAS ALSO THE CLUB'S FUNDS, BUT
IT WASN'T THAT MUCH.
FINALLY, THE MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITION HAD TO PAY MOST OF IT BY THEMSELVES.
YOU DID HAVE A FEW OF THEM, RIGHT ?
AND THE SPONSORS ?
BUT THEY WERE TAKING ONLY ONE FIFTH OF THE COSTS.
IT'S TRUE

BUT, BESIDES THE FINANCIAL QUESTION...
YOU ALSO HAD TO TAKE 4 MONTHS OF HOLIDAYS IN A ROW. IT WAS NOT EASY
AROUND ONE MILLION YEN PER PERSON
ONLY THOSE WHO COULD PAY SUCH A SUM COULD TAKE PART IN THE TRIP.
HABU DID NOT HAVE A STABLE JOB.
ON THIS POINT, IT WAS NOT A PROBLEM FOR HIM.
BUT...
HE DID NOT HAVE MONEY.
DURING THIS PERIOD, ONE MILLION YEN WAS QUITE A SUM.
IT REPRESENTED AROUND 6 MONTHS OF PAY.
HABU WENT DOOR TO DOOR, BUT HE WAS ONLY ABLE TO COLLECT ONE THIRD OF THE SUM
...


FINALLY, HE DID NOT HAVE ANY OTHER CHOICE BUT TO RENOUNCE THE EXPEDITION ON THE ANNAPURNA

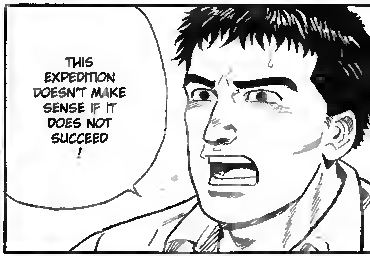

HE TOOK IT BAD.
GLOUB
GLOUB


IT'S NOT NORMAL !
IT'S TOO UNFAIR !
SLAM
PWAAA !

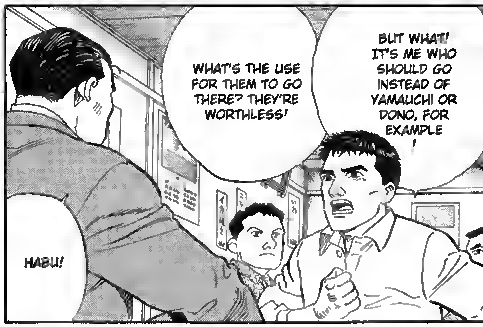
THEN WHY CAN THEY GO AND I CAN'T ?!
PHYSICALLY AND TECHNICALLY, I'M WAY BETTER!
IS IT ENOUGH TO HAVE MONEY AND SO ANY BACKPACKER CAN GO OVER THERE?!
WHY IS IT LIKE THAT, ITOU-SAN ?!

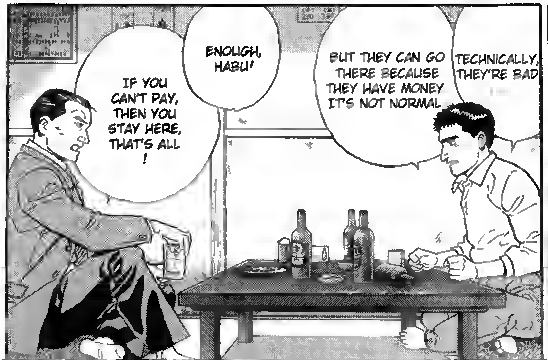
IT IS FUNDAMENTAL FOR THE CLUB!
WE HAVE TO SCALE IT, THAT SUMMIT !
TRUE, YOU'RE TOTALLY RIGHT, BUT ...

HABU ...


THIS EXPEDITION DOESN'T MAKE SENSE IF IT DOES NOT SUCCEED !

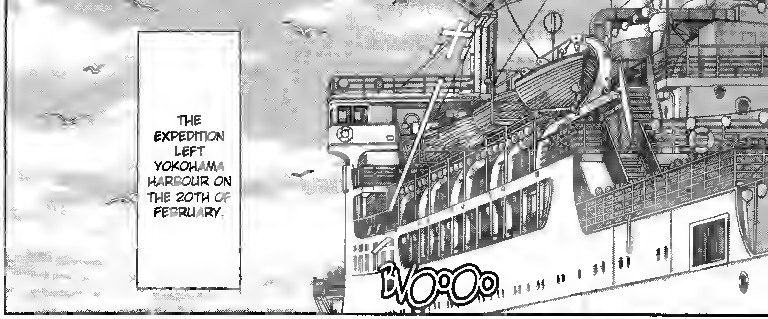
DO YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU'RE SAYING ?!

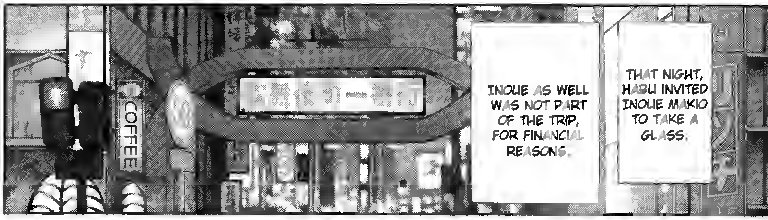

WHAT'S THE USE FOR THEM TO GO THERE? THEY'RE WORTHLESS!
BUT WHAT! IT'S ME WHO SHOULD GO INSTEAD OF YAMAUCHI OR DONO, FOR EXAMPLE !
HABU!

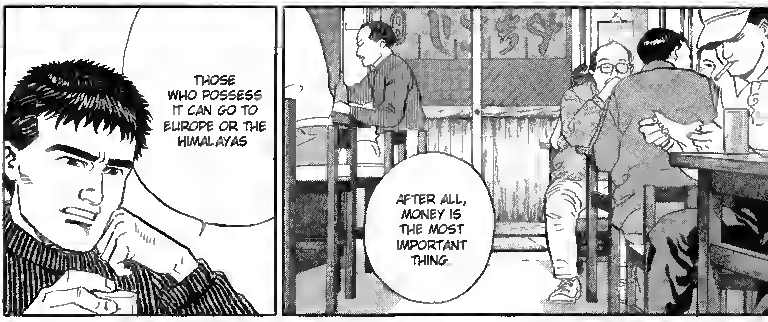

ENOUGH, HABU!
IF YOU CAN'T PAY, THEN YOU STAY HERE, THAT'S ALL !
BUT THEY CAN GO THERE BECAUSE THEY HAVE MONEY IT'S NOT NORMAL
TECHNICALLY, THEY'RE BAD

I ...
I'M JUST TELLING THE TRUTH

ONLY ITOU UNDERSTOOD THAT IT WAS HIS IRRATIONAL LOVE FOR THE MOUNTAINS THAT PUSHED HIM TO MAKE SUCH COMMENTS.
NOBODY IN THE CLUB APPROVED OF HIS BEHAVIOUR SO THEY KEPT THEIR DISTANCE FROM HIM.
MEAN-WHILE ...
A DOZEN DAYS BEFORE THE EXPEDITION'S DEPARTURE, HABU BECAME QUIET
HE DIDN'T GO OUT DRINKING WITH THE OTHERS HE JUST SILENTLY HELPED WITH THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE TRIP
WHAT'S UP WITH HIM AGAIN ?
IT'S GETTING ANNOYING!
I WONDER WHAT HE IS UP TO.
HE WAS SO UPSET LAST TIME.
WHO KNOWS ....


THE EXPEDITION LEFT YOKOHAMA HARBOUR ON THE 20TH OF FEBRUARY.
WOOOo


COFFEE
INOUE AS WELL WAS NOT PART OF THE TRIP, FOR FINANCIAL REASONS.
THAT NIGHT, HARU INVITED INOUE MAKIO TO TAKE A GLASS.


THOSE WHO POSSESS IT CAN GO TO EUROPE OR THE HIMALAYAS
AFTER ALL, MONEY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING.

...
300円
FOR ME, THE MOUNTAINS CONSUMES MY LIFE!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING!
THE MOUTAINS ARE JUST A HOBBY AFTER ALL.
WHAT DO YOU WANT
GLOUB

HABU
...
HOWEVER, IT'S PEOPLE WHO DON'T EVEN SPEND SO DAYS PER YEAR ALONE IN THE MOUNTAINS THAT SCALE THE HIMALAYAN PEAKS
DO YOU FIND IT NORMAL, INOUE ?!
...
I CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE PARTING FROM IT FOR EVEN A DAY.
IT'S ALL I'VE GOT.
...
WE WOULD HAVE SPONSORS THAT WOULD GIVE US MONEY!
IF WE WERE FAMOUS
ALL OF THIS, IT'S BECAUSE WE'RE UNKNOWN !
TO HAVE A NAME
IT'S NOT DIFFICULT ! YOU HAVE TO ACHIEVE SOMETHING THAT NOBODY DID BEFORE!

ONI-SURA ?
YES, ONI-SURA DURING WINTER.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME WITH ME ?

SAY, INOUE !
WOULD YOU COME WITH ME TO ONI-SURA ?
...!

THAT'S MADNESS

I'M TALKING SERIOUSLY

HABU ...
ARE YOU DRUNK OR WHAT ?
NO.

ONI-SURA DURING WINTER, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE.
...
IT'S SUICIDE

ONI-
SURA
THIS NAME COMES FROM THE CONTRACTION OF ONIGOROSHI NO SURABU, "THE PAVING STONE WHERE DEMONS KILL THEMSELVES". AN IMPRACTICABLE CLIFF THAT EVEN DEMONS CAN'T CLIMB ...
ゴゴゴゴゴゴゴゴ
WOOOOOOOM

ZWAAAAAAAS!!!
IT'S ABOUT ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT PASSAGES OF THE MOUNT ICHINOKURA IN THE MOUNTAIN CHAIN OF THE MOUNT TANIGAWA
A MASSIVE AND GIGANTIC CLIFF
WITH THE SNOW IN THE WINTER, IT TRANSFORMS INTO A VERTICAL WALL OF ICE
ZWAAAAAAS!!
THE PLACE IS FAMOUS FOR ITS AVALANCHES THAT RESULTS FROM THE SNOW THAT FALLS IN THE AREA
TILL THEN, NOBODY HAD EVER DARED TO SCALE THOSE CLIFFS DURING WINTER. ONI-SURA WAS KNOWN TO BE THE MOST DANGEROUS CLIFFS YOU CAN FIND IN JAPAN

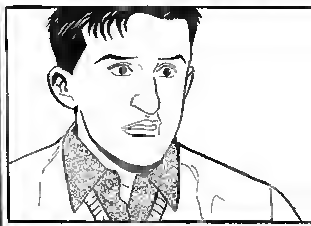
NO! WE CAN DO IT! LET'S GO!
...
I DON'T WANT TO DIE
IT'LL BE WITHOUT ME
HARU ...
I WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO BEAR IT!
NO WAY TO RENOUNCE!
GNUT
AT THEIR RETURN
DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO HEAR THEM BOAST BY TELLING US THEIR EXPLOITS ON THE ANNAPURNA?
THEY LEFT FOR THE HIMALAYAS ONLY BECAUSE THEY HAVE MONEY. AND US! WE WHO ARE BETTER THAN THEM, WE STAY HERE! C'IN YOU TOLER TE THAT?
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S FAIR?
...
TOGETHER, WE CAN DO SOME-THING EVEN BETTER THAN SCALING THE HIMALAYAS!
BAM
WITH BOTH OF US

...
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF YOUR LIFE
...
...WITHOUT THE MOUNTAIN ?

INOUE
....

FOR ME, IT WOULD BE A LIFE NOT WORTH LIVING.
I'D RATHER BE CARRIED AWAY BY AN AVALANCHE
...THAN STAYING HERE WITHOUT DOING ANYTHING!

HAIKU WAS NOT ABLE TO ACCEPT PAIN CONNECTED TO DISAPPOINTMENT.
IT WAS THE CASE FOR THE DEATH OF HIS PARENTS. IT WAS ALSO THE CASE FOR THIS EXPEDITION TO HIMALAYAS, AND IT'D BE AGAIN ON THE EVEREST LATER...

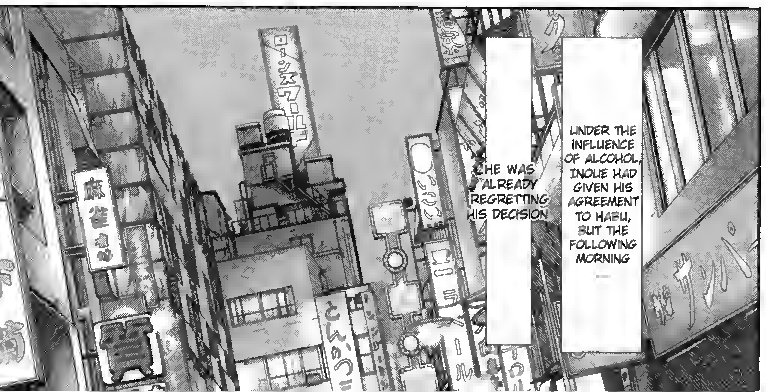


GLOUP

IN HIS BABYISH DEFIANCE TO DISSIPATE HIS SUFFERING BY ACCEPTING THINGS AS THEY WERE HE SEEMED OBLIVIOUS AT TIMES
HIS SUFFERING DRAGGED HIM DOWN. HE JUST COULDN'T LET HIMSELF BE FORGIVEN TO FORGET.
THIS CLIFF IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO CLIMB, ALTHOUGH SOME CONDITIONS MUST BE FULFILLED.
I AM NOT PROPOSING THIS TO YOU ON A WHIM
TRUST ME I HAVE THOUGHT LONG AND HARD ABOUT ONI-SURA.
...
LISTEN UP.

AND THE NEXT DAY
WE'LL ONLY HAVE TO REACH THE SUMMIT BEFORE THE TEMPERATURE RISES.
WE'LL ENTER BY THE BASE OF TAKIZAWA MOUNT. THEN WE'LL BIVOUAC AT THE END OF AFTERNOON
WE MUST HAVE A CLEAR SKY WITH A GOOD MOON.
WITH THE GOOD WEATHER, THE SUN WILL MELT THE SNOW AND WILL CLEAR THE PATH
WE'LL ONLY NEED TO SET UP CAMP AT THE ENTRY POINT AND WAIT TILL ALL THE CONDITIONS ARE MET
...
WHAT DO YOU THINK? SHALL WE DO IT?
WITH THE REVERBERATION OF THE SNOW AND OUR CAP LAMP, WE SHOULD NOT HAVE ANY PROBLEMS TO CLIMB DURING NIGHT
I'VE ALREADY SCALED THIS CLIFF MANY TIMES DURING THE SUMMER
THEN, DURING THE NIGHT, THE SNOW WILL FREEZE, AND THUS, WON'T CAUSE AN AVALANCHE

FOR SURE
THIS IS AN EXPLOIT WHICH DESERVES A MEDAL
THE FIRST ASCENT OF ONI-SURA IN WINTER
BY LISTENING TO HABU, INOUE WAS BEGINNING TO THINK THAT AFTER ALL, IT WAS NOT IMPOSSIBLE
NOT BAD
IF WE SUCCEED IN DOING IT, OUR NAMES WILL STAY IN JAPANESE CLIMBING HISTORY FOREVER!
WHY NOT
YEAH
LET'S GO, INOUE!


UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL, INOUE HAD GIVEN HIS AGREEMENT TO HABU, BUT THE FOLLOWING MORNING
HE WAS ALREADY REGRETTING HIS DECISION

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